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ABSTRACT

Designed for educators actively involved with the teaching of writing, this report contains an overview of the procedures and a detailed presentation of the findings and recommendations of the 1979 Manitoba (Canada) Writing Assessment program. Following an introduction, the five major sections of the report provide the following information: (1) the purpose, nature, and rationale of the writing assessment; (2) the design, construction, and scoring of the tests; (3) the results for grades three, six, nine, and twelve; (4) highlights of the program; and (5) conclusions and recommendations. Appendixes contain names of committees and groups associated with the assessment; objectives, listed in order of priority; names of the participants in the pilot testing program and of scorers of the written tests; a discussion of the results of the assessment; and copies of tests and manuals used in the assessment. (FL)

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MANITOBA WRITING ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

GENERAL REPORT

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A report of the
Measurement and Evaluation Branch
Department of Education
Province of Manitoba
November, 1979

CS 205 989

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
PREFACE	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iv
LIST OF TABLES	v
LIST OF FIGURES	v
1. INTRODUCTION	1
Measurement and Evaluation Branch	1
2. THE WRITING ASSESSMENT: PURPOSE, NATURE, AND RATIONALE	2
Procedures for the Assessment	2
3. DESIGN, CONSTRUCTION, AND SCORING OF THE TESTS	4
Determining the Objectives to be Assessed	4
Test Items	4
Scoring Procedures	8
Interpretation of Results	9
Samples of Student Writing	10
Teacher Evaluation of the Tests	16
Sampling	16
4. RESULTS	18
Grade 3 Results	18
Summary of the Grade 3 Results	34
Grade 6 Results	36
Summary of the Grade 6 Results	57
Grade 9 Results	60
Summary of the Grade 9 Results	77
Grade 12 Results	80
Summary of the Grade 12 Results	118
Teacher Opinion Results	122
Summary of Teacher Opinion Results	138
5. HIGHLIGHTS OF THE WRITING ASSESSMENT PROGRAM	140
6. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	143
Conclusions	143
Recommendations	145

APPENDICES

A. COMMITTEES AND GROUPS ASSOCIATED WITH THE ASSESSMENT

B. PRIORIZATION OF OBJECTIVES AND PILOT TESTING

C. PARTICIPANTS IN THE PILOT TESTING

D. SCORING OF THE WRITING TESTS

E. RESULTS INTERPRETATION FOR THE WRITING ASSESSMENT

F. TESTS AND MANUALS

PREFACE

The General Report contains an overview of the procedures and a detailed presentation of the findings and recommendations of the 1979 Manitoba Writing Assessment Program. It is designed particularly for teachers and other educators actively involved with the teaching of writing. The General Report incorporates the contents of the Summary Report, which provides an overview of the background, major findings, and recommendations of the Program. A Technical Report, which contains information more useful to educators involved in the technical aspects of test design and analysis, also will be available.

It is emphasized that those persons closely associated with the Assessment Program have become acutely aware of the limitations of the assessments; readers of this report are urged to be cautious as well. All measurements of human performances are estimates of actual skills and thus subject to error. Every effort has been made to minimize the error but it can occur in a variety of ways: the selecting of objectives, the setting of test items to fit objectives, the weighting of items, the interpreting of items by students, the categorizing of student responses and marking of papers, the judging of the results, and the presenting of results--to name a few. Furthermore, the intent of the assessment was to obtain estimates of group performance. Use of the tests for individual student diagnosis or grading, therefore, should not occur, except perhaps in conjunction with other tests and assessments.

A second concern regarding the interpretation of results is that it is not possible to attribute strengths and weaknesses to specific aspects of instruction, such as programming or teaching. The variety of societal factors, including changes in the aims of schooling, need to be considered when interpreting the results. The assessment can give us some indication of what our students can do and it is up to us to judge whether we wish to make changes because of these results.

Finally, it must be emphasized that the Writing Assessment results are indicators of a narrow band of the kinds of things that students can and ought to do. Any change that is brought about because of these results must take into consideration possible impact on other aspects of learning which may be equally or even more important.

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An assessment of this scope would not have been possible without the collaboration of the many people involved in the test and report production and the cooperation of the students who wrote the tests and their teachers. It is impossible to enumerate all who contributed but certain people and groups deserve special mention:

. Dr. Dolores MacNaughton who gave professional assistance to all aspects of the program.
. The Joint Committee on Evaluation which provided guidance throughout the whole process.
. The Technical Advisory Committee which advised on the test production and scoring and the analysis of results.
. The many teachers who participated in the review of objectives.
. The schools and their students that assisted in the administration of the pilot tests.
. The scorers who gave up a weekend as well as teaching days to score the provincial sample.
. The Interpretation Panel which carefully adjudicated the results of the testing.
. The divisions and schools which released their teachers to work on the program and provided assistance in obtaining the sample.
. The staff of the Measurement and Evaluation Branch, the Research Branch, and other Branches of the Department of Education who provided necessary support throughout the program.

LIST OF TABLES

		Page
1.	Categories of Writing Skills	5
2.	Clusters and Samples of Objectives Submitted for Priorization by Teachers	6
3.	Provincial Sample of Tests	17
4.	Grade 3 Written Product: Interpretations of Descriptive Ratings	35
5.	Grade 3 Specific Skills: Number of Objectives Receiving Each Interpretation	35
6.	Grade 6 Written Product: Interpretations of Descriptive Ratings	58
7.	Grade 6 Specific Skills: Number of Objectives Receiving Each Interpretation	58
8.	Grade 9 Paragraph: Interpretations of Descriptive Ratings	78
9.	Grade 9 Specific Skills: Number of Objectives Receiving Each Interpretation	78
10.	Grade 12--300 Written Product: Interpretations of Descriptive Ratings	119
11.	Grade 12--301 Written Product: Interpretations of Descriptive Ratings	119
12.	Grade 12--300 Specific Skills: Number of Objectives Receiving Each Interpretation	120
13.	Grade 12--301 Specific Skills: Number of Objectives Receiving Each Interpretation	121
14.	Teacher Response to the Tests	138

LIST OF FIGURES

		Page
1.	Grade 3 Story: Holistic Score "Highly Impressive" by both scorers	10
2.	Grade 3 Story: Holistic Score "Questionable" by both scorers	11
3.	Grade 6 Story: Holistic Score "Highly Impressive" by both scorers	11
4.	Grade 6 Story: Holistic Score "Questionable" by both scorers	12
5.	Grade 9 Paragraph: Holistic Score "Highly Impressive" by both scorers	13
6.	Grade 9 Paragraph: Holistic Score "Questionable" by both scorers	13
7.	Grade 12 Essay: Holistic Score "Highly Impressive" by both scorers	14
8.	Grade 12 Essay: Holistic Score "Questionable" by both scorers	15

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Measurement and Evaluation Branch

The Measurement and Evaluation Branch of the Department of Education was established in April, 1978 to develop and implement a provincial program of learning assessment in Manitoba schools in conjunction with a Joint Committee on Evaluation (representative of the Manitoba Teachers' Society, the Manitoba Association of School Trustees, the Manitoba Association of School Superintendents, the Faculties of Education, and the Department of Education). The Committee was charged with the task of recommending to the Department appropriate patterns and procedures for the ongoing monitoring of student achievement and subsequently acting as consultants to the Measurement and Evaluation Branch in the formulation and implementation of specific testing programs.

The following objectives for the overall program were recommended by the Committee and subsequently approved by the Minister of Education. These objectives constitute the guidelines for all testing programs conducted by the Measurement and Evaluation Branch and they apply specifically to the Writing Assessment to which this report is addressed.

1. To provide benchmark indicators about the level of student achievement in the Province of Manitoba through the systematic gathering of data by means of a 3 year cyclical program of testing in the areas of Reading, Writing, and Mathematics in the key grades 3, 6, 9, and 12 and of a non-cyclic pattern in additional grades and areas of the school curriculum selected according to identified needs, interests, and resources.
2. To develop accurate and systematic data on student achievement that would assist the process of curriculum improvement, both at provincial and local levels.
3. To assist school divisions in both student and system evaluation by supplying information on provincial results to each school to encourage the utilization of the data in conjunction with local evaluation.
4. To assist teachers in the improvement of their student evaluation skills through their active involvement at all stages of the process.

Results would be reported on a provincial basis only, and no individual students, schools, or school divisions would be identified. Provincial data would be reported to the Minister of Education and through the Minister to curriculum committees, Departmental staff, school divisions, and the general public. In addition to the issuing of reports, a series of regional meetings would be held for the purpose of discussing and analyzing test data.

CHAPTER 2

THE WRITING ASSESSMENT: PURPOSE, NATURE, AND RATIONALE

In May of 1979, as the first phase of an ongoing program to survey student achievement in selected areas of the school curriculum, the Measurement and Evaluation Branch of the Department of Education conducted the Writing Assessment Program whereby the writing skills of students in grades 3, 6, 9, and 12 throughout Manitoba were assessed through the administration of tests to a 10 percent random sample of students in each grade.

Writing was selected as the initial area of assessment in 1979 because it is a key area of the core subject of Language Arts and is basic to most school subjects. The ability of students to write effectively has been questioned by some, but at present information on the level of student writing in Manitoba is limited. In general, available data has provided fragmentary and often inconclusive results, although a considerable methodology has been developed; therefore, a systematic collection of data in Manitoba was necessary and feasible.

It was necessary to assess writing at a number of grade levels to provide some indication of skill development in students over a period of time as well as produce baseline data for future assessments of similar nature. Grades 3, 6, 9, and 12 were considered appropriate for this purpose as they represent the last grades respectively of the primary, elementary, junior, and senior programs.

The Writing Assessment Program was not intended to assess the quality of particular courses of the Language Arts curriculum but rather to survey a broad range of writing skills considered important for effective communication. Writing is also fundamental to other curriculum areas and, although this does not mean that all forms of writing are the same or that the writing skills necessary for one purpose are identical to those necessary for another, there are some aspects that are common to most forms of prose writing, for example, ideas, organization, style, mechanics, and choice of words. These aspects form the basis for analytic or descriptive scales used to assess sustained writing in a holistic manner. (For an explanation of these terms, see pp. 11,12).

Some of the components of writing can be further analysed into specific aspects, such as spelling and punctuation, as well as more technical ones. These represent specific features of written expression that are presumed to be correlated with ability in the art of writing.

It was agreed that the assessment should provide indicators of student performance on specific aspects basic to writing as well as on overall writing ability. Writing performance would therefore be assessed in two major sections: a specific skills part that sampled particular features of writing, and a holistic part that provided both global and analytic ratings of a piece of sustained writing.

Procedures for the Assessment

Following the selection of Writing for assessment a Technical Advisory Committee was established to assist in actual production of the tests and review of the results. Language Arts teachers at the four grade levels formed the main body of the Committee, with Departmental

curriculum specialists acting as consultants. Dr. Dolores MacNaughton was contracted to assist in the technical aspects of the test design, construction, and analysis, and worked in conjunction with the Committee and the Measurement and Evaluation Branch.

Writing objectives representative of goals at the four grade levels were compiled. In January, 1979 these were reviewed by the Technical Advisory Committee and then priorized by approximately 300 teachers at six regional meetings throughout the Province located in Winnipeg (2), Carman, Brandon, Dauphin, and The Pas. On February 12, 1979 the Honourable Keith A. Cosens, Minister of Education, formally announced the testing program and the date as the morning of May 16, 1979. He further indicated that the tests would be written by and scored for a 10 percent random sample of students enrolled in public schools at the four grade levels. For teachers wishing to have their entire classes participate in the assessment, sufficient copies of the tests, together with the scoring manual to be used by the Department, would be made available. In addition, in response to subsequent requests, the Department offered seven inservice programs on holistic and descriptive scoring at various provincial centres.

Pilot tests were constructed and administered to 24 classrooms of students at six different locations in Manitoba. The completed pilot tests were used to revise the test instruments and develop practice in the scoring procedures. The revised tests and manuals were sent to schools in Manitoba in late April together with the lists of student names comprising the 10 percent random sample.

On the morning of May 16, 1979, an estimated 86 percent of students in grades 3, 6, 9, and 12 wrote the tests. A total of 4,989 test papers were returned to the Department for the sample: 1400, 1344, 1475, and 770 papers from students in grades 3, 6, 9, and 12 respectively. The numbers represent approximately 9 percent of grade enrollments as there was some loss in the sample, primarily due to student absence and transfer; in addition, grade 12 students who were not enrolled in a grade 12 English course in the spring semester were ineligible, reducing the actual number of papers at this level.

The tests were scored manually by 61 Manitoba teachers in June, 1979 and the results were compiled during July and August. In August, 1979, in the absence of previous criteria or norms, Interpretation Panels of Language Arts teachers and school trustees compared the results to their expectations of student performance to provide a general interpretation of the acceptability of performance levels.

General, Technical, and Summary Reports were prepared and reviewed by the Joint Committee and the Technical Advisory Committee during September and October and recommended for release.

CHAPTER 3

DESIGN, CONSTRUCTION, AND SCORING OF THE TESTS

The Writing Assessment Program was designed to obtain measures of writing performance at four grade levels. The first step in the process was to determine the aspects of writing to be assessed and to design the tasks that were to be asked of the students.

Determining the Objectives to be Assessed

The objectives for writing in the Language Arts program as defined by the Province of Manitoba are given in Table 1 (p. 5). These represent categories common to all grade levels but have varying degrees of emphasis. Initial writing objectives were derived primarily from these lists, but Language Arts programs throughout Canada were also consulted in the process. The result was a set of objectives appropriate for each grade level. These are summarized under the following headings in Table 2: Conventions of Writing, Concepts of Unity and Coherence, Organizing and Writing Patterns, Types of Writing, and Proofreading (pp. 6,7).

These objectives were reviewed by the Technical Advisory Committee and revised lists of objectives constructed which were reviewed by teachers throughout the Province at six regional meetings. Teachers were asked to rate the importance for testing of each of the objectives listed for their grade level on a four-point scale: 4 = Very Important, 3 = Above Average Importance, 2 = Below Average Importance, and 1 = Unimportant. At these meetings also teachers modified objectives, added to the list, indicated weightings for objectives, and suggested means of testing the objectives.

Since it was impossible to test all of the objectives, those objectives which were considered to be the most important were selected. It was necessary to consider simultaneously possible test questions or items that would fit each objective as these would give some indication of the time and effort required of the student. Also, in some instances, a given test task involved several objectives.

The tests at all grade levels contained a section assessing specific skills, which included the clusters of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and basic structure (including word usage and grammar). An additional section involved sustained writing; this, the written product, was assessed according to a number of descriptive scales--these encompassed the concepts of unity, coherence, organization, and style as well as word usage and mechanics. The written product was further assessed in a holistic manner; this provided a global indicator of writing ability.

Test Items

Items were designed to assess each of the objectives; these consisted of student writing samples (free response), and controlled response items to test specific skills objectives. The specific skills objectives were primarily assessed by (a) short-answer questions, i.e., the student is asked to answer a specific question (e.g., "Where is the comma placed in the following sentence?") and evaluated in terms of accuracy or correctness, and (b) multiple choice questions, i.e., the student is asked to select the most appropriate answer from a range of options given

Table 1

Categories of Writing Skills

ENCODING	THINKING (ORGANIZING & PROCESSING)
1. WRITING (SIGHT) VOCABULARY --spells common words by sight	A. LITERAL MEANING Student's writing moves towards increased coherence, unity and emphasis. To achieve this, the writer: a) selects and organizes details so that they support, clarify, and emphasize the main idea b) organizes details or events in a logical sequence c) understands the relationships of: cause-effect, time, space, place d) uses an appropriate style and sturcture (punctuation; pronoun reference; connectives; figurative, picturesque, and idiomatic languages; type and style of writing--narrative, descriptive, expository) e) uses context to clarify intended meaning of words f) distinguishes among fact, opinion, fantasy
2. PHONICS --uses phonetic skills as an aid to correct spelling	
3. STUCTURAL SYNTHESIS --uses a knowledge of word structures as an aid to correct usage and spelling (variant endings, roots, prefixes, suffixes)	
4. CONTEXT --uses words correctly in context (meaning and function)	
5. MEANING VOCABULARY --uses vocabulary which reflects increasing concept development from concrete to abstract (classifying, generalizing, multiple meanings, denotations, connotations)	B. EXTENDED MEANING a) anticipates and to some extent guides the direction of the reader's inferred meanings b) implies meaning c) creates suspense d) anticipates emotional reactions e) establishes an appropriate tone and regulates the mood f) presents clear verbal images g) develops analogies h) anticipates and influences the reader's conclusions
6. PUNCTUATION --uses correctly the common punctuation marks to convey and clarify meaning (period, exclamation mark, question mark, comma, quotation marks, apostrophe, colon, semicolon, hyphen, dash, parentheses, italics, underlining)	C. CRITICAL AND REFLECTIVE EVALUATION The writer should develop the habit of evaluating his/her writing. To do this he/she must consider: a) his/her purpose b) the reader and situation c) the suitability of his/her material and expression (style) in relation to purpose and reader d) the validity of his/her ideas and supporting materials
7. SENTENCES --uses a variety of sentence forms appropriate to purpose	
8. USAGE a) formal writing moves toward acceptable Canadian usage b) writing is deployed for a wide variety of purposes	
9. DICTIONARY AND THESAURUS a) uses dictionary efficiently as an aid to spelling and meaning b) uses thesaurus efficiently as an aid to word selection and idiomatic usage	
10. GRAMMAR --written work reflects an awareness of English syntax (order of words) and accidence (forms of words that show case, number, person, tense, voice, mood, degree, or other relationships)	

NOTE: From Language Arts Skills K-XII, by Manitoba Department of Education, Winnipeg: Province of Manitoba, 1977.

Table 2

Clusters and Samples of Objectives Submitted for Priorization by Teachers

(One sample objective only is given for each grade level and cluster.)

	Grade 3	Grade 6
CONVENTIONS OF WRITING		
Spelling	Spell words with long and short vowels.	Spell words with silent letters.
Punctuation	Use periods after abbreviations.	Use commas to set off words of direct address.
Capitalization	Use capitals at the beginning of a sentence.	Use capitals for the first word of a quote.
Handwriting	Legibly write manuscript and cursive letters.	
Basic Structures of English	Identify and write declarative sentence types.	Use correct form--consistent verb tense.
Dictionary Usage and Study Skills	Use beginning dictionary as an aid to spelling.	Use dictionary as an aid to meaning.
CONCEPTS OF UNITY AND COHERENCE		
In Sentences	Write complete sentences.	Write appropriate topic sentences.
In Paragraphs	Write paragraphs that focus on the topic.	Relate supporting details to main idea.
ORGANIZING AND WRITING PATTERNS		
Organization of Ideas	Organize by time.	Give evidence of some logical organization.
Sentence and Paragraph Organization	Use compound sentences.	Use variety in sentence patterns.
Stylistic Devices and Language Development	Use language to communicate feeling.	Write with purpose or intent.
TYPES OF WRITING		
Social	Write friendly personal letters.	Write friendly letters--"thank you".
Business/vocational	(not considered)	Write business letters--ordering an item.
Scholastic communication	Write simple stories.	Write stories that include character, setting, and plot.
PROOFREADING	Proofread for complete sentences.	Proofread for sentence structure.

Table 2 continued

Clusters and Samples of Objectives Submitted for Priorization by Teachers

(One sample objective only is given for each grade level and cluster.)

	Grade 9	Grade 12
CONVENTIONS OF WRITING		
Spelling	Spell frequently confused suffixes--e.g., -ance, -ence.	Spell most frequently misspelled words due to mispronunciation and confusibles.
Punctuation	Use quotation marks.	Use underlining to indicate italics.
Capitalization	Apply capitalization consistently.	Apply capitalization rules consistently.
Handwriting	Legibly write manuscript and cursive letters.	Maintain legibility and fluency.
Basic Structures of English	Use correct forms--main and subordinate clauses.	Use parallel structures.
Dictionary Usage and Study Skills	Use the thesaurus as an aid to word selection and idiomatic usage.	Proficiently use the thesaurus as an aid to word selection and idiomatic usage.
CONCEPTS OF UNITY AND COHERENCE		
In Sentences	Use appropriate transitional words and phrases for organizing by comparison.	Write sentences without redundance and excessive lengthiness.
In Paragraphs	Write expository paragraphs.	Keep style, mood, and point of view consistent.
ORGANIZING AND WRITING PATTERNS		
Organization of Ideas	Organize ideas by cause and effect--cause-effect chains.	Support opinions with logic and/or facts.
Sentence and Paragraph Organization	Vary sentence structure to emphasize ideas, effect transition, and create effect.	Use or implied use of topic sentence.
Stylistic Devices and Language Development	Write without the use of overworked words and phrases, e.g., nice	Use literacy devices, e.g., irony.
TYPES OF WRITING		
Social	Write messages.	Write friendly letters--condolence.
Business/vocational	Write business letters of application.	Write a resume.
Scholastic Communication	Write a summary.	Write an opinion that reflects attention to the overall content of an argument of discussion.
PROOFREADING	Proofread for word choice and accuracy.	Proofread for clarity of purpose and intent.

(e.g., "Underline the correct form in each of these sentences"). An example, from the grade 6 test, of items to test specific skills in spelling is:

OBJECTIVE: Spells regular and irregular plural words
TEST ITEMS: (the students spell these words)
berries
questions
churches

A sustained writing task was required of all students at each grade level. In grades 3 and 6 this involved the writing of a story. Grade 9 students were asked to write a business letter and paragraph, and grade 12 students wrote an expository essay. Each of these, except the business letter, was scored holistically and, including the business letter, according to a number of descriptive scales representative of the writing objectives.

Scoring Procedures

All student tests were scored manually. Scoring keys were produced for the specific skills sections of the tests. The written product was scored in two different ways (except for the business letter in grade 9). A global rating of the quality of the produce was obtained first and then a number of descriptive ratings were determined. The business letter in grade 9 was scored according to three scales which were similar to those used for the descriptive scoring. The global rating was done quickly, with the intent of obtaining an impression--this is the holistic score. The descriptive ratings were based on scales reflecting key aspects of the writing.

Holistic scoring. Two scorers rated each written product (except the business letter) using the Holistic Marking Scale. This scale gives a global impressionistic rating of the overall quality of the writing. It is not dependent on any one aspect of the writing but rather on the total impact on the reader created by the writing.

HOLISTIC MARKING SCALE

5 = Highly Impressive--well above average in thought, sentence structure and word choice, mostly free from error. This is a very high level of performance expected only of a limited number of students.

4 = Commendable--in command of thought, sentence structure, and word choice, relatively free from error. This is a high level of performance indicating considerable writing ability.

3 = Questionable--probably functional in terms of thought and sentence structure, but in need of instruction. This is not unreasonable performance but some weaknesses and possible difficulties are apparent. Teacher assistance appears warranted.

2 = Minimal--in need of remediation, frustration level. This is performance that exhibits a considerable number of difficulties, and assistance is essential

1 = Insufficient material--not enough material to permit a judgement.

This is actually a 4-point scale as "1" indicates a written product that was impossible to judge; it is not the lowest score.

For the Provincial sample, scorers were trained and monitored to assure reliability of holistic scoring. Agreement between scorers was good at all grade levels--over 58 percent of student papers received identical scores from both scorers. Approximately 3 percent of student papers received scores that differed by more than one point. When this occurred a third scorer was assigned to the paper.

The two holistic scores were added to obtain the combined holistic score (the third score was averaged with the first two wherever it was necessary). Thus, combined holistic scores ranged from a low of 4 to a high of 10.

Descriptive scoring. One scorer rated each of the written products according to the descriptive scales. Descriptive scores are actually impressionistic ratings of the written work according to designated aspects. The scales used are similar to the following one taken from the grade 6 test.

Logical organization (the objective or aspect)

4 = Ideas appropriately organized by time, place, and sequence

3 = Error in logical organization (one error)

2 = Error in logical organization (more than one error)

1 = Insufficient evidence.

This is actually a 3-point scale as "1" indicates material that is not sufficient to permit a judgement.

Nine, ten, and eight descriptive scales were used for the grade 3, 6, and 12 written products respectively. In grade 9 the business letter was rated according to three scales and the paragraph according to nine scales. Scorers were trained and monitored to maintain reliability of scoring. Periodically, scored papers were rescored by other scorers and any differences were discussed. Agreement on the appropriate score was attained.

Interpretation of Results

In the absence of previously obtained, representative information on writing performance by Manitoba students, it was necessary to adjudicate the performance on the present tests. An Interpretation Panel of five experienced Language Arts educators and a designate from the Manitoba Association of School Trustees was assembled for each of the four grade levels.

Individual Panel members stated the performance they could expect of student at that grade level under good teaching conditions. This was done for all writing objectives assessed by the tests. Grade level Panels then arrived at a consensus regarding expected performance.

After expected performance was obtained individual members compared the expected performance with that attained by the Provincial sample. The scale used was the following:

ACHIEVEMENT INTERPRETATION SCALE

Highly Satisfactory: Actual achievement is well beyond what is expected. This is considered to be an area of strength.

Satisfactory: Actual achievement is somewhat beyond what is expected.

Acceptable: Actual achievement corresponds approximately with what is expected.

Marginal: Actual achievement is somewhat below what is expected, but not to the point of being totally unacceptable. This is considered to be an area where some additional work is desirable.

Unsatisfactory: Actual achievement is well below what is expected. This is considered to be an area of weakness and remediation is deemed necessary.

Performance on each objective was interpreted. As a final step grade level Panels attempted to obtain consensus interpretations for the objectives. In the main agreement among Panel members regarding both expected performance and interpretations of actual performances was achieved.

It is necessary to note that all interpretations reflect the performances of the total sample at the particular grade level.

Samples of Student Writing

In order to give a clearer indication of student papers that warranted various scores, samples of student writing at all four grade levels are provided. The samples characterize what both scorers rated as "Highly Impressive" and as "Questionable". These samples are not "perfect examples" of the particular score level, but reflect qualities that are indicative of the scores attained. They give some idea of what students wrote, but do not indicate the rich variety of responses that were received. The writing samples are reproduced (in italics) as accurately as possible, including errors.

Grade 3 writing samples. Two samples of grade 3 stories are provided below. The first three sentences of the story were provided for the student; the additional sentences are the students's written product. Students received these written directions:

DIRECTIONS: Write a story about what happened to Pat and the creature.

Figure 1. Grade 3 Story: Holistic Score "Highly Impressive" by Both Scorers

---

One night Pat climbed into bed and quickly feel asleep. Then a most exciting thing happened. In a dream a strange creature took Pat on an adventure. *Then the strange creature took him to another planet. Pat didn't know where he was, so he asked the creature where he was, "Mr. Creature what planet is this?" The creature answered "Call me Comedy". "OK". "Mr. Comedy tell me which planet is this?" Then Comedy answered "This is earth!" "Earth?" Pat echoed "Yes." said Comedy chuckling.*

"1,000,000 years before your time." "1,000,000 years!" Pat echoed again. "There was choclate grass!" "Milkshake trees?" Pat exclaimed. "Lets go on," said Comedy. Comedy led him to a river that was full of candy rocks! "Yum." Pat exclaimed. "How would you like to go back to your time?" asked Comedy. "Not yet!" answered Pat. "I want to go back 500 years before my time!" "Hang on here we go!" said Comedy. There wasn't as much to see there. So Pat said "Lets go back to my time." When Pat woke up the next morning he sighed and said "Too bad it was just a dream!" And with that he fell asleep.

Figure 2. Grade 3 Story: Holistic Score "Questionable" by both Scorers.

One night Pat climbed into bed and quickly fell asleep. Then a most exciting thing happened. In a dream a strange creature took Pat on an adventure. *The stranger took Pat into a big forest. The stranger left Pat there. She was afrade. She started too yell for help. But no one came. Then the stranger came back with food. She ate all of it. After that she took a walk then she heard footsteps Pat began to run she yelled and yelled for help. Then she woke up. It was just a nightmar. Pat told her mother than moning. Pats mother agree it was frighting.*

Grade 6 writing samples. Two samples of grade 6 stories are provided below. The beginning of the story was provided for the student; the additional portion is the student's written product. Students received these written directions:

DIRECTIONS: You have been given the beginnings for three stories. Choose ONE of them and finish the story.

Figure 3. Grade 6 Story: Holistic Score "Highly Impressive" by Both Scorers.

With knapsacks on their shoulders, three excited teen-agers set out to explore a cave deep in the forest. They had trudged a mile through the forest and were in sight of the cave, when suddenly, without warning . . . *swoosh, in they went! They had fallen in a deep, steep hole, which was obviously some sort of trap. "How will we ever get out of here?" they questioned each other.*

Sometime later, at about noon, they realized how dangerous their situation was. Since they had only planned on staying a day, their supplies were very meager. Jody had carried one first-aid kit containing a small package of bandaids, some adhesive tape, scissors, needles and thread, peroxide, paper, a pencil, aspirin, and a small amount of food and water. This, to them, seemed unnecessary at the time but luckily their parents had insisted. Jane, had carried the three canteens of

water, and Marion had carried the supply of food. At this time they realized they had enough for about a week, if they were careful. Another thing which added to their worries was that they had just told their parents they were hiking to no specific place.

At about 3:00, they heard footsteps coming from the cave. "Hello, up there!" the shrieked loudly, but the footsteps went right on by the trap. It was as though they couldn't be heard.

A few days later they had exactly half of what they had started out with. Suddently, they heard heavy footsteps, much different from the one they had heard before. "Hello, up there!" they called and this time they got a reply.

"I'll be right with you," a big burly forest ranger called.

So the girls were rescued and that trap filled in but the first set of footsteps remained a mystery.

Figure 4. Grade 6 Story: Holistic Score "Questionable" by Both Scorers.

It was "Pet Day" at school. Our teacher had finally agreed that we could bring our pets to school for one day. Everything seemed under control in the classroom as we got ready to introduce our pets to our classmates. Just then Bob brought in his cat. Then all the dogs went after it. They trampled down the teacher.

She said "Who's the guilty one?"

Nobody said anything. The dogs where all over the school. I spotted the cat. But just as I was going to grab it a dog running out. We final caught one and put him in the classroom. Then Brent was going to put a dog in the classroom the other one got out again Gary was running after a dog then he slipped on some soap. Kevin went after a dog and got tripped by a other dog and into a door We got the cat and found a dog in a water tube.

Grade 9 writing samples. Two samples of grade 9 paragraphs are provided below. Four topics were given to the student along with an indication of the audience to which the paragraph was to be direct3d. Five criteria for the paragraph were also given the student. The actual written directions to the student began with:

> DIRECTIONS: Choose ONE of the following topics and write ONE PARAGRAPH ONLY. Your paragraph may be written in either a comic or serious vein.

Figure 5. Grade 9 Paragraph: Holistic Score "Highly Impressive" by Both Scorers

Topic: "You wish to give advice on buying a used car . . .."

Buying a used car can be risky. You can never be sure if the car is in really good condition. There are a few hints though that will save you a lot of sorrow. First of all, get the car up on a hoist and check the frame to see if it has been in an accident. A slightly bent frame which has been welded will tell you that it has been in a bangup. After being fixed a car is not really as trustworthy as before. Next, take a magnet and check to see if the body is made of metal or putty. After you have ascertained that the body is okay, have a trusted mechanic listen and check the motor to find out if any expensive repairs are necessary. Once you've decided that the car is all right you can decide if the condition of the car and the price fit together. After that the car is wholly your responsibility if you buy it.

Figure 6. Grade 9 Paragraph: Holistic Score "Questionable" by Both Scorers

Topic: ". . . the most important skill in your favourite sport . . .."

Since my favorite sport is fencing, particularly sabre. I would suppose that there are many things to talk about but a few are more important. The sabre is a difficult weapon to master considering that it is light, fast, and hard to defend against. A person would need very fast reflexes to "riposte" after an attempted "thrust" or many other problems would need the know-how to master. Also a person must know at all times where the opponent's blade is and to be able to instinctively know what the opponent will do next. All in all, fencing, and particularly the sabre, is a very difficult sport which requires much practise, training, and experience.

Grade 12 writing samples. Two samples of grade 12 essays are provided below. Grade 12 students were given five topics and four thesis statements and requested to write an essay on one of these. Seven criteria for scoring the essay were also provided. The written directions given to the student began with:

DIRECTIONS: Choose ONE topic from EITHER List A or List B...WRITE AN ESSAY ON THE TOPIC YOU HAVE CHOSEN.

Figure 7. Grade 12 Essay: Holistic Score "Highly Impressive" by Both Scorers

Topic: "The Right to Be Happy"

The "Right" to be Happy

The idea of a "Right" to be happy is most ridiculous. It is not recognized by even the most freedom-loving nation in the world, although some, like the United States, come fairly close. Why not? Because it is completely absurd and foolish to believe that such a right could be effectively administered.

To understand this, it is first necessary determine exactly what "rights" are. Contrary to popular Western beliefs, there is absolutely no such thing as a "God-given" right. A "right" is a privilege bestowed upon an individual (or group of individuals) by the society in which he lives. All rights come entirely from an. Thus, it can be said that nobody has the right to do anything, unless (a) he can effectively fight the will of his society; or (b) his society decides to give him such rights.

The next important concept is exactly what a right to be happy would entail. For the most part, it would mean that whatever a person feels is necessary to his happiness belongs to him by virtue of his rights. Such a system has severl flaws. What would happen, for example, if a person decided that his happiness required an income of at least $85,000 dollars/year, but at the same time required that he not have to work? More than just a few people would act in this manner, as greed is, after all, a common human characteristic.

Now, compare this system with that of the United States. The U.S. Constitution guarantees the right to pursue happiness. This is an extremely significant difference. Because there are usually many ways to pursue the one, finite pinnacle which is that person's idea of happiness, an individual may now (and, in fact must) pursue his happiness without interfering with the rights of others. This is what makes such a system workable, as opposed to one as absolute as a right to be happy.

Thus, it can be seen that a "right to be happy" is totally unfeasible. While it may be grand and noble in intent, it is unmanageable in practice, because of the near-infinite conflicts and paradoxes it creates within itself. The whole thing can be viewed as a giant Catch-22: I need something to be happy, so by law I must be allowed to have it, and yet my possession of it would make another man unhappy, so that I cannot have it. This system, therefore, simply cannot work.

Figure 8. Grade 12 Essay: Holistic Score "Questionable" by Both Scorers

Topic: "An Issue of Great Concern to Society"

Wild or domestic, large or small, vicious or gentle, animals have their own unique ways of getting their points across. If they could put it into words, animals would probably let people know just how badly they have done since man decided that he had the right to choose who would live and who would die. Exploited and corrupted by man for centuries, the responsibility for trying to minimize the extensive and very often irreversable damage done to life on earth lies at man's door. Helping animals, protecting them and defending their rights, is one of the most worthwhile and rewarding professions there is, can be attempted in many different ways, depending on the field you enter.

Although many animals have been hunted to extinction or the point of extinction, man's invasion and destruction of their habitats if far more dangerous to them, and is responsible for the extinction of many more species than guns are. Isolated islands, haven for birds, especially those who have lost their flight through evolution, were invaded by man. He introduced enemies the birds and animals which were formerly safe because they had no natural enemies: the result was almost inevitably extinction. Australia and Tasmania, homes of many marsupials which had long since vanished almost completely from the rest of the world, were discovered by Europeans who brought with them mammals which challenged the natural wildlife of the land. Such interference, introducing animals, which resulted again in extinction or severe depletion of the number of species. North American and African species were very had hit because of the sudden and very fast transformation of the land. Animals had no chance to retreat or adapt to new environments, as they had in Europe and Asia.

While hunting may have not been quite as damaging as transformation of habitats, man again is responsible for destroying species for "sport" or for money. Buffalo of North America were at the very point of extinction from hunting. Using next to nothing of the animal, carcasses were left rotting all over the prairies. Many African animals, large game, have suffered severe depletion from hunters after a "trophy". With such cruel and pointless killing, conservation work is very worthwhile and necessary.

Wild animals are not the only ones to suffer from man's inhumanity. Domestic animals are mistreated and neglected, through ignorance, indifference, laziness or cruelty. Small things, like riding a horse a little to far or a little to hard when he's not in shape, or deliberately torchering a cat or dog to death, are very common occurrances that often go unnoticed. There is very little if anything the animal can do to protect himself; fighting back will only bring more punishment.

In laboratories, animals are being used, suffering and dying in the name of science. This is merely one more example of how "humane" people can be. Since animals have no chance to defend themselves, someone must do it for them. Because it is man's fault that animals suffer, whether it be from being hunted uselessly or being locked in a tiny cage in a zoo with a mob of big mouthed people staring at them, it is only logical that man should accept his responsibility toward them. Be entering one of the many fields involved with animals, a person may, in some way be able to help undo the damage he has already done.

Teacher Evaluation of the Tests

Teachers whose classes were involved in the assessment were asked to give their opinion on various aspects of the assessment. Four 9-point scales were used to determine how clear the testing instructions were, how closely the test content matched the teaching, how satisfactory the test difficulty was, and overall how satisfactory the test was. Also teachers were asked if they would request enough copies to test their entire classes in the future. Teachers could comment on the test as they saw fit.

The teacher opinion form was provided with the test manual as a separate sheet. These were returned to the Department with the student tests.

Sampling

On the advice of the Joint Committee on Evaluation it was decided that a 10 percent random sample would adequately represent students in the Province. On February 16, 1979, the Research Branch of the Department requested student enrollment lists from grades 3, 6, 9, and 12 classes in the Province's Public Schools. Students eligible for the sample were those presently in the final year of Language Arts in the primary, intermediate, and grade nine programs, and those enrolled in a Grade 12 Language Arts course in the spring semester.

On the basis of the enrollment lists 10 percent of the students were randomly designated for the provincial sample. On the testing day schools were requested to forward the papers of these students.

The actual sample of student papers received was approximately nine percent of the designated population. Primarily, sample loss was due to student absence and transfer--this was

indicated on the returned sample lists. Also a small proportion of the student sample was dislocated by spring flooding. It is assumed that the loss is essentially random and thus the effect is expected to be negligible.

Table 3

Sample of Tests

Grade	Numbers of Students	Tests Scored	
		Number	Percentage
3	15,470	1,400	9.05%
6	14,480	1,344	9.28%
9	16,550	1,475	8.91%
12	9,200*	770	8.37%
	55,700	4,989	8.96%

*A number of grade 12 students were ineligible since they had completed their English course in a previous semester.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

The Writing Assessment results are reported separately for each grade level, 3, 6, 9, and then 12. The results for each test item and objective, including the adjudications of the Interpretation Panel, are presented in tabular form. The test manuals and actual tests accompany the tabulated information so that cross-referencing is possible.

A brief description of the method of reporting is provided for each grade level. This is followed by the achievement results for every cluster of objectives, specific objective, and item. A summary of the results is provided after the detailed results. The manuals and tests are given in Appendix F.

The reader is encouraged to consider the actual test questions in conjunction with the results so that the performance of students is clear. The instructions given to the student in the test are given for each cluster in the tabulated results.

GRADE 3 RESULTS

The clusters of skills assessed at the grade 3 level are spelling, written product (holistic and descriptive scales), capitalization, punctuation, sentence writing, sentence completion, and sentence identification. A number of objectives are identified within each of these clusters, and each objective has test items corresponding to it.

The average performance of students on each test item is given. The results of appropriate items are combined and average performance for each objective is presented. Results for objectives are combined to form an "overall" score for each cluster which is also presented. Performance is indicated as a "percentage correct" for items which are either "correct" or "incorrect", and as the "percentage of students achieving each category" for items with scales of more than correct-incorrect categories (e.g., holistic scale). Performance on most objectives and clusters is also indicated as a "mean" (arithmetic average) with the "maximum possible" given in the next column.

Results of the interpretations of performance by the Interpretation Panel are provided adjacent to the performance. Interpretations were on the scale: Highly Satisfactory, Satisfactory, Acceptable, Marginal, Unsatisfactory. The definition of the particular category awarded by the Panel accompanies the interpretation. It is important to note that lower levels of performance on some objectives may be considered "Acceptable", and that the same level of performance may be rated "Minimal" on one objective and "Satisfactory" on another. This is because some objectives and items are more difficult than others, and student performance on these cannot be expected to be as high as on others.

Detailed results. The format for presentation of detailed grade 3 results is tabular. An example is given below for an objective in spelling and for a descriptive rating of the written product.

One of the objectives in the spelling cluster involved the spelling of three words with diphthongs; the actual words (items) are "bought", "owl", and "noise". Regarding performance 63.9%[1] of students spelled "bought" correctly, 92.7% spelled "owl" correctly, and 65.5% spelled "noise" correctly. When the three words were combined, the average performance for the objective was 74.0% (or 2.22 out of a maximum of 3). This was rated by the Interpretation Panel as "Acceptable" performance on these words by grade 3 students.

CLUSTER: SPELLING

Objective	Mean Percentage	Achievement Interpretation for Objective	Item Performance	
			Items Keyed to Objective	Per Cent of Students Obtaining Item Correct
3. Diphthongs	74.0%	ACCEPTABLE	6. bought 14. owl 21. noise	63.9% 92.7% 65.5%

The written product was assessed holistically and according to nine descriptive scales. The seventh descriptive scale involved "Sentence Structure" (note that there are no actual items corresponding to the descriptive scales). The scale categories are 4, 3, and 2 (1 is actually "Insufficient Evidence"), and the percentage of students that received each of these was 27.7%, 39.9%, and 30.1% respectively. The mean performance was 2.93 on the scale from 2 to 4. This performance was considered "Satisfactory" by the Interpretation Panel.

CLUSTER: WRITTEN PRODUCT

Descriptive Marking Scales		Per Cent of Students Obtaining Each Score	Mean Performance	Achievement Interpretation for Objective
Objective	Scale			
7. Sentence Structure	4 3 2 1	27.7% 39.9% 30.1% 2.3%	2.93	SATISFACTORY

[1]For clarity of the presentation in this section all percentages of student papers are given in symbols: e.g., 63.9%.

GRADE 3 PART I CLUSTER II: WRITTEN PRODUCT NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 1400

(II. DIRECTIONS: Write a story about what happened to Pat and the creature. Remember that an interesting story has a beginning, middle, and ending. Write your story in the space below.)

Holistic Scoring

HOLISTIC MARKING SCALE

5 = Highly Impressive	- well above average in thought, sentence structure and word choice, mostly free from error.
4 = Commendable	- in command of thought, sentence structure and word choice, relatively free from error.
3 = Questionable	- probably functional in terms of thought, sentence structure, and word choice but in need of instruction.
2 = Minimal	- in need of remediation--frustration level.
1 = Insufficient Material	

Each story was scored by two markers. If the difference between scores exceeded one, the story was scored by a third marker. Each story was then given a combined holistic score based on one of the following:

a) If 2 scorers were used

FIRST SCORE + SECOND SCORE = COMBINED SCORE (Maximum of 10)

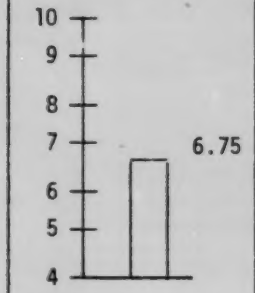
b) If 3 scorers were used

$$\frac{\text{FIRST SCORE + SECOND SCORE}}{2} + \text{THIRD SCORE} = \text{COMBINED SCORE (Maximum of 10)}$$

Using this process, stories received scores ranging from a high of 10 (both scorers gave it a 5, Highly Impressive) to a low of 4 (both scorers gave it a 2, Minimal). A score of 2 means that the essay was not long enough to permit a judgement.

GRADE 3 PART I CLUSTER II: WRITTEN PRODUCT (continued) NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 1400

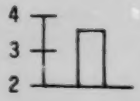
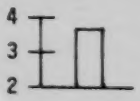
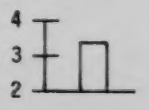
Holistic Scoring (continued)

Holistic Marking Scale	Combined Score	Per Cent of Students Obtaining Each Score	Mean Performance
Highly Impressive - well above average in thought, sentence structure and word choice, mostly free from error.	10	4.2%	
	9	8.2%	
Commendable - in command of thought, sentence structure and word choice, relatively free from error.	8	17.6%	
	7	18.9%	
Questionable - probably functional in terms of thought, sentence structure, and word choice but in need of instruction.	6	34.1%	
	5	9.3%	
Minimal - in need of remediation--frustration level.	4	6.1%	
Insufficient Material.	2	1.4%	

(Interpretation of the holistic score results was not necessary since holistic scoring is based on interpretative ratings.)

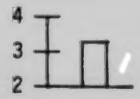
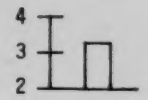
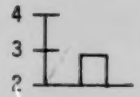
GRADE 3 PART I CLUSTER II: WRITTEN PRODUCT (continued) NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 1400

Descriptive Scoring

Descriptive Marking Scales		Per Cent of Students Obtaining Each Score	Mean Performance	Achievement Interpretation for Objective
Objective	Scale			
1. Focus on Topic	4 = Ideas relate to topic	71.0%	 3.61	ACCEPTABLE: Actual achievement corresponds approximately with what is expected.
	3 = Fluctuation but focus is on topic	20.3%		
	2 = Deviates from topic	6.4%		
	1 = Insufficient evidence	2.3%		
2. Middle and Ending	4 = Includes appropriate middle and ending	67.4%	 3.61	SATISFACTORY: Actual achievement is somewhat beyond what is expected.
	3 = Lacks one element	27.6%		
	2 = Lacks more than one element	3.0%		
	1 = Insufficient evidence	2.0%		
3. Organize by time (Verb tense and sequence of events)	4 = Ideas appropriately organized by time	58.6%	 3.39	ACCEPTABLE: Actual achievement corresponds approximately with what is expected.
	3 = Error in organization by time (one error)	24.1%		
	2 = Error in organization by time (more than one error)	15.0%		
	1 = Insufficient evidence	2.4%		

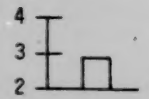
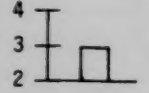
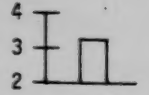
GRADE 3 PART I CLUSTER II: WRITTEN PRODUCT (continued) NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 1400

Descriptive Scoring

Descriptive Marking Scales		Per Cent of Students Obtaining Each Score	Mean Performance	Achievement Interpretation for Objective
Objective	Scale			
4. Descriptive words and phrases	4 = Use of descriptive words and phrases to create impact 3 = Word choice ordinary and functional 2 = Insufficient use of vocabulary indicated 1 = Insufficient evidence	28.1% 63.9% 5.9% 2.0%	 3.18	SATISFACTORY: Actual achievement is somewhat beyond what is expected.
5. Topic development (Communicate feelings, creative)	4 = Originality of ideas creates impact 3 = Ideas ordinary and functional 2== Insufficient number of ideas 1 = Insufficient evidence	30.5% 57.4% 10.1% 1.9%	 3.17	ACCEPTABLE: Actual achievement corresponds approximately with what is expected.
6. Complete sentences	4 = Write complete sentences (no errors) 3 = Error in writing complete sentences (1 or 2 errors) 2 = Errors in writing complete sentences (more than 2 errors) 1 = Insufficient evidence	23.7% 36.1%	 2.81	ACCEPTABLE: Actual achievement corresponds approximately with what is expected.

GRADE 3 PART I CLUSTER II: WRITTEN PRODUCT (continued) NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 1400

Descriptive Scoring

Descriptive Marking Scales: Objective	Descriptive Marking Scales: Scale	Per Cent of Students Obtaining Each Score	Mean Performance	Achievement Interpretation for Objective
7. Sentence structure	4 = Varies sentence lengths and patterns to create impact	27.7%	 2.93	SATISFACTORY: Actual achievement is somewhat beyond what is expected.
	3 = Varies sentence lengths and patterns but doesn't create impact	39.9%		
	2 = Does not use varying sentence lengths and patterns	30.1%		
	1 = Insufficient evidence	2.3%		
8. Punctuation and capitalization	4 = Capitalizes and punctuates correctly (0-2 errors)	37.7%	 2.96	SATISFACTORY: Actual achievement is somewhat beyond what is expected.
	3 = Errors in capitalization and punctuation (3-4 errors)	22.4%		
	2 = Errors in capitalization and punctuation (more than 4 errors)	37.5%		
	1 = Insufficient evidence			
9. Spelling	4 = Spelling attracts little or no attention	41.6%	 3.18	ACCEPTABLE: Actual achievement corresponds approximately with what is expected.
	3 = Several errors which do not detract from impact	36.5%		
	2 = Errors detract from readability and impression	20.1%		
	1 = Insufficient evidence	1.9%		

GRADE 3 PART I CLUSTER II: WRITTEN PRODUCT (continued) NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 1400

Descriptive Scoring (continued)

By adding up the scores for each story, it was possible to assign each one an overall score. Overall scoring ranged from a maximum of 36 (the story received a score of 4 on each descriptive scale) to a low of 18 (the story received a score of 2 on each of the scales). A mark of 9 would simply mean that the story was not long enough to permit a judgement, and therefore received a mark of 1 on each descriptive scale.

Overall Score on Descriptive Scales	Per Cent of Students Obtaining Each Overall Score	Mean Performance
34 - 36	16.1%	36
31 - 33	23.8%	33
28 - 30	25.9%	30 — 29.21
25 - 27	18.6%	27
22 - 24	9.5%	24
19 - 21	3.6%	21
16 - 18	.6%	18
9 (Insufficient evidence)	2.2%	

GRADE 3 PART I CLUSTER I: SPELLING NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 1400

(DIRECTIONS: In each of the spaces provided, write the word which is dictated by the teacher.)

Objective	Achievement on Objective			Achievement Interpretation for Objective	Item Performance	
	Mean Percentage	Score Mean	Score Maximum		Items Keyed to Objectives	Per Cent of Students Obtaining Item Correct
1. Vowels	91.7%	2.75	3.0	ACCEPTABLE: Actual achievement corresponds approximately with what is expected.	1. hope 11. feet 18. bump	94.4% 96.8% 83.9%
2. Plurals	72.8%	2.18	3.0	ACCEPTABLE: Actual achievement corresponds approximately with what is expected.	5. dishes 10. rabbits 16. babies	83.2% 74.1% 61.0%
3. Dipthongs	74.0%	2.22	3.0	ACCEPTABLE: Actual achievement corresponds approximately with what is expected.	6. bought 14. owl 21. noise	63.9% 92.7% 65.5%
4. Contractions	79.1%	2.37	3.0	ACCEPTABLE: Actual achievement corresponds approximately with what is expected.	2. it's 8. I'll 12. don't	72.9% 74.9% 89.4%
5. Words from Dolch List	70.5%	2.12	3.0	ACCEPTABLE: Actual achievement corresponds approximately with what is expected.	3. because 15. their 19. brown	73.3% 48.3% 89.8%

GRADE 3 PART I CLUSTER I: SPELLING (continued) NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 1400

Objective	Achievement on Objective			Achievement Interpretation for Objective	Item Performance	
	Mean Percentage	Score			Items Keyed to Objectives	Per Cent of Students Obtaining Item Correct
		Mean	Maximum			
6. Blends	77.4%	2.32	3.0	ACCEPTABLE: Actual achievement corresponds approximately with what is expected.	4. shelter 7. catch 20. split	72.8% 78.1% 81.2%
7. Endings	77.8%	2.33	3.0	ACCEPTABLE: Actual achievement corresponds approximately with what is expected.	9. talks 13. swimming 17. helping	69.1% 73.8% 90.2%
OVERALL (Items 1 to 21)	77.6%	16.29	21.0			

GRADE 3 PART II CLUSTER I: PUNCTUATION and CAPITALIZATION NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 1400

(DIRECTIONS: *Some of the PUNCTUATION MARKS and CAPITAL LETTERS are missing in these sentences. Find each mistake and make the correction in the sentence. DO NOT REWRITE THE SENTENCE.*

Capitalization

Objective	Achievement on Objective			Achievement Interpretation for Objective	Item Performance		
	Mean Percentage	Score			Sentence Number	Items Keyed to Objectives	Per Cent of Students Obtaining Item Correct
		Mean	Maximum				
1. Beginning of a sentence	91.3%	4.56	5.0	ACCEPTABLE: Actual achievement corresponds approximately with what is expected.	1. 2. 3. 4. 5.	1. Do 4. Why 7. Maybe 12. We 15. We	92.4% 91.1% 90.5% 91.5% 90.8%
2. Proper Noun	80.0%	3.19	4.0	ACCEPTABLE: Actual achievement corresponds approximately with what is expected.	1. 3. 4. 5.	2. Manitoba 10. Smith 13. Canada 18. Black	85.3% 79.1% 87.5% 67.5%
3. Capitalization of abbreviations	77.3%	2.32	3.0	ACCEPTABLE: Actual achievement corresponds approximately with what is expected.	3. 3. 5.	8. Mr. 9. Mrs. 17. Dr.	80.3% 80.2% 71.6%
OVERALL (12 items on capitalization)	83.9%	10.07	12.0				

GRADE 3 PART II CLUSTER I: PUNCTUATION and CAPITALIZATION (continued) NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 1400

Punctuation

Objective	Acheivement on Objective			Achievement Interpretation for Objective	Item Performance		
	Mean Percentage	Score			Sentence Number	Items Keyed to Objectives	Per Cent of Students Obtaining Item Correct
		Mean	Maximum				
1. Question marks at end of sentence	85.40%	1.71	2.0	HIGHLY SATISFACTORY: Actual achievement is well beyond what is expected. This is considered to be an area of strength.	1. 2.	3. "?" 6. "?"	87.9% 82.9%
2. Period at end of sentence	82.63%	2.48	3.0	ACCEPTABLE: Actual achievement corresponds approximately with what is expected.	3. 4. 5.	11. "." or "!" 14. "." 19. "."	78.9% 83.6% 85.4%
3. Apostrophes for contractions	36.6%	0.73	2.0	UNSATISFACTORY: Actual achievement is well below what is expected. This is considered to be an area of weakness and remediation is deemed necessary.	2. 5.	5. couldn't 16. won't	40.6% 32.5%
OVERALL (7 items on punctuation)	70.3%	4.92	7.0				
OVERALL (Items 1 to 19 on punctuation and capitalization)	78.9%	14.99	19.0				

GRADE 3 PART II CLUSTER II: SENTENCE WRITING: TELLING SENTENCE NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 1400

(II. DIRECTIONS: *Write a TELLING SENTENCE using each group of words. You will have to add words to make your sentence.*)

TELLING SENTENCE

Scale Categories	Per Cent of Students Obtaining each Category: Mean for Three Items	Achievement Interpretation for Objective	Item Performance		
			Items	Scale Categories	Per Cent of Students Obtaining each Category
Correct	59.3%	MARGINAL: Actual Achievement is somewhat below what is expected, but not to the point of being totally unacceptable. This is considered to be an area where some additional work is considered desirable.	1. river, dog, swam	Correct	77.9%
Word or word order error	18.5%			Word or word order error	4.1%
Capitalization and/or punctuation error	13.3%			Capitalization and/or punctuation error	14.5%
Multiple error	8.7%			Multiple error	3.5%
			2. tree, wind, whistled	Correct	59.6%
				Word or word order error	16.4%
				Capitalization and/or punctuation error	15.0%
				Multiple error	8.9%
			3. boy, girl, yells	Correct	40.5%
				Word or word order error	35.1%
				Capitalization and/or punctuation error	10.5%
				Multiple error	13.7%

GRADE 3 PART II CLUSTER III: SENTENCE WRITING: ASKING SENTENCE NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 1400

(III. DIRECTIONS: *Write an ASKING SENTENCE using each group of words. You will have to add words to make your sentence.*)

ASKING SENTENCE

Scale Categories	Per Cent of Students Obtaining each Category· Mean for Three Items	Achievement Interpretation for Objective	Item Performance		
			Items	Scale Categories	Per Cent of Students Obtaining Each Category
Correct	64.6%	ACCEPTABLE: Actual Achievement corresponds approximately with what is expected.	1. cat, bird, chase	Correct	67.8%
Word or word order error	7.4%			Word or word order error	6.4%
Capitalization and/or punctuation error	13.2%			Capitalization and/or punctuation error	12.0%
Multiple error	14.7%			Multiple error	13.7%
			2. egg, pan, fry	Correct	63.4%
				Word or word order error	9.9%
				Capitalization and/or punctuation error	13.1%
				Multiple error	13.6%
			3. fire, wood, burn	Correct	62.6%
				Word or word order error	5.9%
				Capitalization and/or punctuation error	14.5%
				Multiple error	16.8%

GRADE 3 PART II CLUSTER IV: SENTENCE COMPLETION NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 1400

(IV. DIRECTIONS: *Add words to each of the following to make a sentence.*)

Objective	% for Objective	Mean for Objective	Maximum Possible for Objective	Achievement Interpretation for Objective	Item Performance	
					Items Keyed to Objectives	Per Cent of Students Obtaining Item Correct
1. Subject-verb agreement	89.4%	2.68	3.0	SATISFACTORY: Actual achievement is somewhat beyond what is expected.	1. A big dog ___. 4. ___ were sitting in the car. 8. The growling bears ___.	91.6% 88.1% 88.4%
2. Inflected Endings	84.7%	2.54	3.0	SATISFACTORY: Actual achievement is somewhat beyond what is expected.	2. The animals were ___ in the pond. 3. The striped tiger had ___ the lion in the jungle. 6. Kelly was the ___ runner among all the children.	92.0% 76.0% 86.2%
3. Verb tense	90.9%	2.73	3.0	SATISFACTORY: Actual achievement is somewhat beyond what is expected.	5. Yesterday the circus ___. 7. Today Jack ___. 9. Next week my aunt ___.	90.6% 92.5% 89.5%
OVERALL (Items 1 to 9)	88.3%	7.95	9.0			

GRADE 3 PART II CLUSTER V: SENTENCE IDENTIFICATION NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 1400

(V. DIRECTIONS: *Circle the following groups of words which are sentences.*)

Objective	% for Objective	Mean for Objective	Maximum Possible for Objective	Achievement Interpretation for Objective	Item Performance	
					Items Keyed to Objectives	Per Cent of Students Obtaining Item Correct
1. Identifying Complete Sentences	88.3%	4.41	5.0	SATISFACTORY: Actual achievement is somewhat beyond what is expected.	3. We have a black cat 4. I like to eat popcorn 6. Our house is very big 7. The dog barked loudly 9. My wagon is broken	92.4% 91.2% 91.9% 79.7% 86.1%
2. Identifying Incomplete Sentences	87.5%	3.49	4.0	SATISFACTORY: Actual achievement is somewhat beyond what is expected.	1. Like a busy bee 2. Across the wire fence 5. To the end of the town 8. The man with gray hair	91.0% 85.4% 89.3% 83.5%
OVERALL (Items 1 to 9)	87.9%	7.90	9.0			

Summary of the Grade 3 Results

The grade 3 test assessed writing skills by two types of tasks, one involving a written product and the other involving specific skill responses. The written product was scored holistically and according to the nine descriptive scales.

Written product: Holistic scoring. Grade 3 students were requested to write a story continuing from three sentences given. The stories were rated holistically according to the Holistic Marking Scale by two scorers. The scale categories were:

Highly Impressive	- well above average in thought, sentence structure and word choice, mostly free from error.
Commendable	- in command of thought, sentence structure and word choice, relatively free from error.
Questionable	- probably functional in terms of thought and sentence structure, but in need of instruction.
Minimal	- in need of remediation--frustration level.
Insufficient Material	

Of the 1,400 student stories scored, 30.0% were considered "Highly Impressive" or "Commendable" by both scorers. An additional 18.9% were rated "Commendable" by one scorer and "Questionable" by the other. A total of 49.5% of students were considered in need of some instruction on the basis of their story writing. Only 6.1% of students (part of the 49.5%) were considered "Minimal", or in need of considerable assistance, by both scorers. The remaining 1.5% of student papers were too limited to permit scoring.

Written product: Descriptive scoring. The grade 3 stories were rated by one scorer on nine descriptive scales. Performance on each descriptive scale was further evaluated by the Interpretation Panel according to the scale:

Achievement Interpretation Scale

Highly Satisfactory: Actual achievement is well beyond what is expected. This is considered to be an area of strength.

Satisfactory: Actual achievement is somewhat beyond what is expected.

Acceptable: Actual achievement corresponds approximately with what is expected.

Marginal: Actual achievement is somewhat below what is expected, but not to the point of being totally unacceptable. This is considered to be an area where some additional work is considered desirable.

Unsatisfactory: Actual achievement is well below what is expected. This is considered to be an area of weakness and remediation is deemed necessary.

The Interpretation Panel considered performance of grade 3 students on four of the scales as "Satisfactory" and on the remaining five as "Acceptable". Thus, no distinct strengths nor weaknesses were discovered in student writing.

Table 3

Grade 3 Written Product: Interpretations of Descriptive Ratings

Descriptive Scale	Interpretation
1. Focus on Topic	Acceptable
2. Middle and Ending	Satisfactory
3. Organize by Time (Verb Tense and sequence of events)	Acceptable
4. Descriptive Words and Phrases	Satisfactory
5. Topic Development (Communicate feelings, Creative)	Acceptable
6. Complete Sentences	Acceptable
7. Sentence Structure	Satisfactory
8. Punctuation and Capitalization	Satisfactory
9. Spelling	Acceptable

Specific skills. In total 20 objectives were assessed as specific skills. These were grouped within the clusters of spelling, capitalization, punctuation, sentence writing, sentence completion, and sentence identification. Performance on each objective was evaluated by the Interpretation Panel according to the Achievement Interpretation Scale.

Student performance on 12 of the 20 objectives was rated as "Acceptable"; these were primarily in spelling and capitalization. Performance on the five sentence completion and sentence identification objectives was rated as "Satisfactory". On one punctuation objective, "Use of question marks at the end of a sentence", performance was rated "Highly Satisfactory"; this punctuation skill was considered an area of strength.

Performance on one sentence writing objective was considered "Marginal". On one punctuation objective, "Use of apostrophes for contractions", performance was "Unsatisfactory"; this punctuation skill was considered an area of weakness.

Table 4

Grade 3 Specific Skills: Number of Objectives Receiving Each Interpretation

Clusters of Objectives	Achievement Interpretation Scale					Numbers of Objectives Tested
	Unsatis-factory	Marginal	Acceptable	Satis-factory	Highly Satis-factory	
Spelling			7			7
Capitalization			3			3
Punctuation	1		1		1	3
Sentence Writing		1	1			2
Sentence Completion				3		3
Sentence Identification				2		2
Total Number of Objectives						20

GRADE 6 RESULTS

The clusters of skills assessed at the grade 6 level are spelling, capitalization, punctuation, basic structure, sentence writing, and written product (holistic and descriptive scales). A number of objectives are identified within each of these clusters, and each objective has test items corresponding to it.

The average performance of students on each test item is given. The results of appropriate items are combined and average performance for each objective is presented. Results for objectives are combined to form an "overall" score for each cluster which is also presented. Performance is indicated as a "percentage correct" for items which are either "correct" or "incorrect", and as the "percentage of students achieving each category" for items with scales of more than correct-incorrect categories (e.g., holistic scale). Performance on most objectives and clusters is also indicated as a "mean" (arithmetic average) with the "maximum possible" given in the next column.

Interpretations of performance on each objective by the Interpretation Panel are provided adjacent to the performance. Interpretations were on the scale: Highly Satisfactory, Satisfactory, Acceptable, Marginal, Unsatisfactory. Each rating is accompanied by the definition of that rating. It is important to note that lower levels of performance on some objectives may be considered "Acceptable", and that the same level of performance may be rated "Minimal" on one objective and "Satisfactory" on another. This is because some objectives and items are more difficult than others, and student performance on these cannot be expected to be as high as on others.

Detailed results. The format for presentation of detailed grade 6 results is tabular. An example is given below for an objective in spelling and for a descriptive rating of the written product.

One objective in the spelling cluster involved spelling of words with homonyms; the actual words (items) are "weather", "their", and "piece". Of the 1,344 students 84.4% spelled "weather" correctly, 73.3% spelled "their" correctly, and 67.9% spelled "piece" correctly. When the three words were combined for the objective, the average performance was 75.2% (or 2.26 out of a maximum of 3). This was rated by the Interpretation Panel as "Acceptable" performance on these words by grade 6 students.

CLUSTER: SPELLING

Objective	Mean Percentage	Achievement Interpretation for Objective	Item Performance	
			Items Keyed to Objective	Per Cent of Students Obtaining Item Correct
3. Homonyms	75.3%	ACCEPTABLE	6. weather 9. their 23. piece	84.4% 73.3% 67.9%

The written product was assessed holistically and also assessed according to ten descriptive scales. The seventh descriptive scale was "Paragraph Format" (note that there are no actual items corresponding to the descriptive scales). The scale categories were 4, 3, and 2 (1 is actually "Insufficient Evidence"), and the percentage of students that re-eived each of these was 23.0%, 19.6%, and 53.0% respectively. The mean performance was 2.69 on the scale from 2 to 4. This performance was considered "Acceptable" by the Interpretation Panel.

CLUSTER: WRITTEN PRODUCT

Descriptive Marking Scales		Per Cent of Students Obtaining Each Score	Mean Performance	Achievement Interpretation for Objective
Objective	Scale			
7. Paragraph format	4 3 2 1	23.0% 19.6% 53.0% 4.4%	2.69	ACCEPTABLE

GRADE 6 PART II CLUSTER: WRITTEN PRODUCT NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 1344

(*DIRECTIONS: You have the beginnings for three stories. Choose ONE of them and finish the story. Make sure your story is well-organized and contains a variety of descriptive words and phrases. Pay attention to all the writing skills you have learned.*)

Holistic Scoring

HOLISTIC MARKING SCALE

5 = Highly Impressive	- well above average in thought, sentence structure and word choice, mostly free from error.
4 = Commendable	- in command of thought, sentence structure and word choice, relatively free from error.
3 = Questionable	- probably functional in terms of thought and sentence structure but in need of instruction.
2 = Minimal	- in need of remediation--frustration level.
1 = Insufficient material	

Each story was scored by two markers. If there was a difference of more than one, the story was scored by a third marker. Each story was then given a combined holistic score based on one of the following:

a) If 2 scorers were used

FIRST SCORE + SECOND SCORE = COMBINED SCORE (Maximum 10)

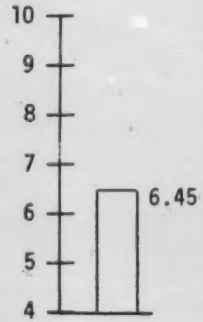
b) If 3 scorers were used

$$\frac{\text{FIRST SCORE} + \text{SECOND SCORE}}{2} + \text{THIRD SCORE} = \text{FINAL SCORE (Maximum 10)}$$

Stories received scores ranging from a high of 10 (both scorers awarded a 5, Highly Impressive) to a low of 4 (both scorers awarded a 2, Minimal). A score of 2 means that the essay was not long enough to permit a judgement.

GRADE 6 PART II CLUSTER: WRITTEN PRODUCT (continued) NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 1344

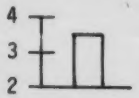
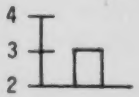
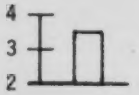
Holistic Scoring (continued)

Holistic Marking Scale	Combined Score	Per Cent of Students Obtaining Each Score	Mean Performance
Highly Impressive - well above average in thought, sentence structure and word choice, mostly free from error	10	2.1%	
	9	5.5%	
Commendable - in command of thought, sentence structure and word choice, relatively free from error.	8	13.9%	
	7	21.2%	
Questionable - probably functional in terms of thought, sentence structure, and word choice but in need of instruction.	6	34.9%	
	5	13.0%	
Minimal - in need of remediation--frustration level.	4	7.8%	
Insufficient material.	2	1.5%	

(Interpretation of the holistic score results was not necessary since holistic scoring is based on interpretative ratings.)

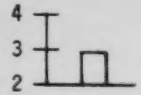
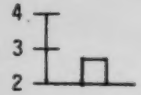
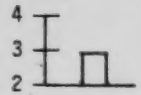
GRADE 6 PART II CLUSTER II: WRITTEN PRODUCT (continued) NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 1344

Descriptive Scoring

Descriptive Marking Scales		Per Cent of Students Obtaining Each Score	Mean Performance	Achievement Interpretation for Objective
Objective	Scale			
1. Development of Topic	4 = Relates details to main idea	58.4%	 3.53	SATISFACTORY: Actual achievement is somewhat beyond what is expected.
	3 = Fluctuation but focus is on the topic	32.1%		
	2 = Deviates from topic	6.8%		
	1 = Insufficient evidence	2.7%		
2. Descriptive and Precise Vocabulary	4 = Use of descriptive and precise vocabulary to create impact	13.8%	 3.04	SATISFACTORY: Actual achievement is somewhat beyond what is expected.
	3 = Word choice ordinary and functional	74.3%		
	2 = Insufficient use of vocabulary indicated	10.1%		
	1 = Insufficient evidence			
3. Logical organization	4 = Ideas appropriately organized by time, place and sequence	61.8%	 3.54	HIGHLY SATISFACTORY: actual achievement is well beyond what is expected. This is considered to be an area of strength.
	3 = Error in logical organization (one error)	25.8%		
	2 = Error in logical organization (more than one error)	9.6%		
	1 = Insufficient evidence	2.8%		

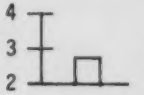
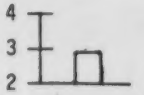
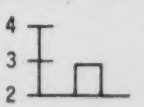
GRADE 6 PART II CLUSTER II: WRITTEN PRODUCT (continued) NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 1344

Descriptive Scoring (continued)

Descriptive Marking Scales		Per Cent of Students Obtaining Each Score	Mean Performance	Achievement Interpretation for Objective
Objective	Scale			
4. character, setting, plot	4 = Interesting development of character, setting and plot 3 = Conventional development of character, setting and plot 2 = Weaknesses in the development of character, setting and plot 1 = Insufficient evidence	14.6% 57.8% 25.6% 2.5%	 2.89	ACCEPTABLE: Actual achievement corresponds approximately with what is expected.
5. Variety in Sentence patterns	4 = Effect created by varying sentence structures 3 = slight effect created by varying sentence structures 2 = No effect created by varying sentence structures 1 = Insufficient evidence	9.1% 52.5% 35.4% 3.1%	 2.73	ACCEPTABLE: Actual achievement corresponds approximately with what is expected.
6. Correct usage	4 = Uses words appropriately and correctly 3 = Error in correct usage (2 or fewer) 2 = Error in correct usage (more than 2) 1 = Insufficient evidence	25.1% 41.0% 31.5% 2.4%	 2.93	ACCEPTABLE: Actual achievement corresponds approximately with what is expected.

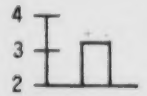
GRADE 6 PART II CLUSTER II: WRITTEN PRODUCT (continued) NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 1344

Descriptive Scoring (continued)

Descriptive Marking Scales		Per Cent of Students Obtaining Each Score	Mean Performance	Achievement Interpretation for Objective
Objective	Scale			
7. Paragraph format	4 = Paragraph format used correctly	23.0%	 2.69	ACCEPTABLE: Actual achievement corresponds approximately with what is expected.
	3 = Error in paragraph format (one error)	19.6%		
	2 = Inadequate use of paragraphing	53.0%		
	1 = Insufficient evidence	4.4%		
8. Complete sentences	4 = Writes complete sentences (no errors)	27.2%	 2.86	ACCEPTABLE: Actual achievement corresponds approximately with what is expected.
	3 = Error in writing complete sentences (one error)	28.9%		
	2 = Errors in writing complete sentences (2 or more errors)	41.4%		
	1 = Insufficient evidence	2.5%		
9. Punctuation and Capitalization	4 = Capitalizes and punctuates correctly (0-2 errors)	33.4%	 2.86	SATISFACTORY: Actual achievement is somewhat beyond what is expected.
	3 = Errors in capitalization and punctuation (3-4 errors)	27.5%		
	2 = Errors in capitalization and punctuation (more than 4 errors)	37.1%		
	1 = Insufficient evidence	1.9%		

GRADE 6 PART II CLUSTER II: WRITTEN PRODUCT (continued) NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 1344

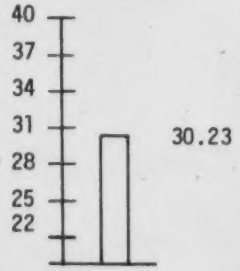
Descriptive Scoring (continued)

Descriptive Marking Scales		Per Cent of Students Obtaining Each Score	Mean Performance	Achievement Interpretation for Objective
Objective	Scale			
10. Spelling	4 = Spelling attracts little or no attention	36.0%	 3.17	SATISFACTORY: Actual achievement is somewhat beyond what is expected.
	3 = Few errors which do not detract from impact	42.7%		
	2 = Errors detract from readability and impression	19.4%		
	1 = Insufficient evidence	1.9%		

GRADE 6 PART III CLUSTER II: WRITTEN PRODUCT (continued) NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 1344

Descriptive Scoring (continued)

By adding up the scores for each story, it was possible to assign each one an overall score. Overall Overall scoring ranged from a maximum of 36 (the story received a score of 4 on each descriptive scale) to a low of 18 (the story received a score of 2 on each of the scales). A mark of 9 would simply mean that the story was not long enough to permit a judgement, and therefore received a mark of 1 on each descriptive scale.

Overall Score on Descriptive Scales	Per Cent of Students Obtaining Each Overall Score	Mean Performance
38 - 40	5.3%	
35 - 37	13.6%	
32 - 34	20.3%	
29 - 31	23.4%	
26 - 28	19.2%	
23 - 25	10.9%	
20 - 22	4.5%	
10 (Insufficient evidence)	2.7%	

GRADE 6 PART I CLUSTER I: SPELLING NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 1344

(I. DIRECTIONS: *In each of the spaces provided, write the word which is dictated by the teacher.*)

Objective	Achievement on Objective			Achievement Interpretation for Objective	Item Performance	
	Mean Percentage	Score			Items Keyed to Objectives	Per Cent of Students Obtaining Item Correct
		Mean	Maximum			
1. Multisyllabic	58.8%	3.53	6.0	MARGINAL: Actual achievement is somewhat below what is expected, but not to the point of being totally unacceptable. This is considered to be an area where some additional work is considered desirable.	1. ambularce 4. experience 7. business 13. bicycle 20. beautiful 22. accident	76.4% 46.8% 45.9% 57.2% 65.5% 61.2%
2. Silent Letters	83.3%	2.50	3.0	HIGHLY SATISFACTORY: Actual achievement is well beyond what is expected. This is considered to be an area of strength.	2. through 10. straight 15. island	83.4% 73.6% 93.2%
3. Homonyms	75.3%	2.26	3.0	ACCEPTABLE: Actual achievement corresponds approximately with what is expected.	6. weather 9. their 23. piece	84.4% 73.3% 67.9%
4. Endings	67.0%	2.01	3.0	ACCEPTABLE: Actual achievement corresponds approximately with what is expected.	3. beginning 16. grabbed 19. kidnappers	47.4% 68.5% 85.2%

GRADE 6 PART I CLUSTER I: SPELLING (continued) NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 1344

Objective	Achievement on Objective			Achievement Interpretation for Objective	Item Performance	
	Mean Percentage	Score			Items Keyed to Objectives	Per cent of Students Obtaining Item Correct
		Mean	Maximum			
5. Plurals	83.7%	2.51	3.0	ACCEPTABLE: Actual achievement corresponds approximately with what is expected.	12. berries 18. questions 24. churches	83.8% 83.1% 84.5%
6. Prefix-Suffix	67.0%	2.01	3.0	ACCEPTABLE: Actual achievement corresponds approximately with what is expected.	5. information 14. finally 17. mysterious	81.0% 67.7% 52.7%
7. Possessives	48.7%	1.46	3.0	UNSATISFACTORY: Actual achievement is well below what is expected. This is considered to be an area of weakness and remediation is deemed necessary.	8. children's 11. chief's 21. its	58.0% 40.9% 47.5%
OVERALL (Items 1 to 24)	67.9%	16.28	24.0			

GRADE 6 PART I CLUSTER II: PUNCTUATION and CAPITALIZATION NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 1344

(II. DIRECTIONS: *Some of the PUNCTUATION MARKS and CAPITAL LETTERS are missing in the following sentences. Find the mistakes and make the corrections.*)

Capitalization

Objective	Achievement on Objective			Achievement Interpretation for Objective	Item Performance		
	Mean Percentage	Score			Sentence Number	Item Keyed to Objectives	Per Cent of Students Obtaining Item Correct
		Mean	Maximum				
1. First Word of Direct Quotation	45.2%	0.90	2.0	UNSATISFACTORY: Actual achievement is well below what is expected. This is considered to be an area of weakness and remediation is deemed necessary.	1. 4.	2. 19.	45.4% 44.9%
2. Title of Story or Poem	66.0%	1.98	3.0	MARGINAL: Actual achievement is somewhat below what is expected, but not to the point of being totally unacceptable. This is considered to be an area where some additional work is considered desirable.	2. 6. 6.	9. 30. 31.	59.2% 70.8% 67.9%
3. Title of Rank	70.6%	2.12	3.0	ACCEPTABLE: Actual achievement corresponds approximately with what is expected.	1. 3. 4.	5. 13. 21.	69.0% 68.0% 74.9%

GRADE 6 PART I CLUSTER II: PUNCTUATION and CAPITALIZATION (continued) NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 1344

Capitalization (continued)

Objective	Achievement on Objective			Achievement Interpretation for Objective	Item Performance		
	Mean Percentage	Score			Sentence Number	Item Keyed to Objectives	Per Cent of Students Obtaining Item Correct
		Mean	Maximum				
4. Proper Noun	73.9%	2.19	3.0	MARGINAL: Actual achievement is somewhat below what is expected, but not to the point of being totally unacceptable. This is considered to be an area where some additional work is considered desirable.	1. 1. 3.	4. 6. 14.	70.1% 75.1% 73.6%
5. Sacred Name	55.7%	1.67	3.0	MARGINAL: Actual achievement is somewhat below what is expected, but not to the point of being totally unacceptable. This is considered to be an area where some additional work is considered desirable.	4. 6. 6.	20. 32. 33.	26.8% 68.8% 71.4%
6. Organization or Institution	40.8%	1.22	3.0	UNSATISFACTORY: Actual achievement is well below what is expected. This is considered to be an area of weakness and remediation is deemed necessary.	4. 5. 5.	22. 26. 27.	25.8% 53.3% 43.2%
OVERALL (17 Items on Capitalization	59.3%	10.08	17.0				

GRADE 6 PART I CLUSTER II: PUNCTUATION and CAPITALIZATION (continued) NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 1344

Punctuation

Objective	Achievement on Objective			Achievement Interpretation for Objective	Item Performance		
	Mean Percentage	Score			Sentence Number	Item Keyed to Objectives	Per Cent of Students Obtaining Item Correct
		Mean	Maximum				
1. Comma --Introductory Words	54.2%	1.08	2.0	ACCEPTABLE: Actual achievement corresponds approximately with what is expected.	2. 5.	8. 24.	51.9% 56.5%
2. Comma--Series	74.2%	2.23	3.0	ACCEPTABLE: Actual achievement corresponds approximately with what is expected.	2. 3. 5.	10. 16. 25.	68.8% 73.4% 80.4%
3. Commas--Direct Address	23.3%	0.70	3.0	UNSATISFACTORY: Actual achievement is well below what is expected. This is considered to be an area of weakness and remediation is deemed necessary.	1. 3. 6.	3. 15. 29.	12.8% 19.5% 37.7%
4. Quotation Marks --Direct Quotation	60.3%	1.81	3.0	MARGINAL: Actual achievement is somewhat below what is expected, but not to the point of being totally unacceptable. This is considered to be an area where some additional work is considered desirable.	1. 3. 4.	1. 12. 18.	58.9% 57.7% 64.3%

GRADE 6 PART I CLUSTER II: PUNCTUATION and CAPITALIZATION (continued) NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 1344

Punctuation (continued)

Objective	Achievement on Objective			Achievement Interpretation for Objective	Item Performance		
	Mean Percentage	Score			Sentence Number	Item Keyed to Objectives	Per Cent of Students Obtaining Item Correct
		Mean	Maximum				
5. End Punctuation --Period, Question Mark, Exclamation Mark	70.6%	4.23	6.0	ACCEPTABLE: Actual achievement corresponds approximately with what is expected.	1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6.	7. 11. 17. 23. 28. 34.	89.2% 90.3% 37.3% 64.6% 86.2% 55.9%
OVERALL (17 Items on punctuation)	59.1% 59.1%	10.05 10.05	17.0 17.0				
OVERALL (Items 1 to 34 on punctuation and capitalization)	59.2%	20.13	34.0				

GRADE 6 PART I CLUSTER III: BASIC STRUCTURE (USAGE) NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 1344

(III. DIRECTIONS: *Underline the correct form in each of the following sentences.*)

Objective	Achievement on Objective			Achievement Interpretation for Objective	Item Performance	
	Mean Percentage	Score			Items Keyed to Objectives	Per Cent of Students Obtaining Item Correct
		Mean	Maximum			
1. Associated Adverbs and Adjectives	72.3%	2.89	4.0	SATISFACTORY: Actual achievement is somewhat beyond what is expected.	3. good, well 11. most, almost 21. who's, whose 22. real, really	91.1% 86.5% 39.8% 71.7%
2. Associated Verbs (e.g., sit, set)	90.4%	1.81	2.0	HIGHLY SATISFACTORY: Actual achievement is well beyond what is expected. This is considered to be an area of strength.	6. teach, learn 9. sit, set	90.2% 90.6%
3. Associated Prepositions (e.g., of, off)	74.5%	2.24	3.0	SATISFACTORY: Actual achievement is somewhat beyond what is expected.	13. among, between 18. in, into 24. on, onto	68.6% 77.3% 77.6%
4. Subject-verb agreement	82.3%	2.47	3.0	SATISFACTORY: Actual achievement is somewhat beyond what is expected.	2. was, were 14. was, were 20. needs, need	73.7% 87.2% 86.2%

GRADE 6 PART I CLUSTER III. BASIC STRUCTURE (USAGE) (continued) NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 1344

Objective	Achievement on Objective			Achievement Interpretation for Objective	Item Performance	
	Mean Percentage	Score			Items Keyed to Objectives	Per Cent of Students Obtaining Item Correct
		Mean	Maximum			
5. Verb Tense	77.4%	1.68	3.0	MARGINAL: Actual achievement is somewhat below what is expected, but not to the point of being totally unacceptable. This is considered to be an area where some additional work is considered desirable.	5. sang, sung 8. bit, bitten 17. stole, stolen	48.2% 87.1% 97.0%
6. Pronoun and Antecedent	94.9%	2.85	3.0	HIGHLY SATISFACTORY: Actual achievement is well beyond what is expected. This is considered to be an area of strength.	1. she, they 12. hisself, himself 23. it has, they have	97.3% 94.4% 93.1%
7. Negatives	87.1%	2.61	3.0	HIGHLY SATISFACTORY: Actual achievement is well beyond what is expected. This is considered to be an area of strength.	4. anything, nothing 10. no, any 16. can, can't	87.6% 88.9% 84.7%
8. Homonyms	86.5%	2.59	3.0	HIGHLY SATISFACTORY: Actual achievement is well beyond what is expected. This is considered to be an area of strength.	7. to, too 15. forth, fourth 19. flour, flower	76.3% 87.5% 95.7%
OVERALL (Items 1 to 24)	79.8%	19.14	24.0			

GRADE 6 PART I CLUSTER IV: SENTENCE WRITING NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 1344

(IV. DIRECTIONS: *Read the directions for each of the following sections. Write sentences using the given directions.*)

Objective	Scale Categories	Per Cent of Students Obtaining Each Category: Mean for Two Items	Achievement Interpretation for Objective	Item Performance		
				Item	Scale Categories	Per Cent of Students Obtaining Each Category
A. Subordination (sentence combining using subordination)	Correctly combined--used subordination	54.1%	ACCEPTABLE: Actual achievement corresponds approximately with what is expected.	A.1.	Correct--used subordination	76.0%
	Correctly combined--didn't use subordination	23.2%			Correct--didn't use subordination	7.4%
	Incorrectly combined	19.1%			Incorrectly combined	13.8%
	Other--not able to be scored	3.8%			Other	2.9%
				2.	Correct--used subordination	32.1%
					Correct--didn't use subordination	38.9%
					Incorrectly combined	24.3%
					Other	4.7%
B. Modifiers (added descriptive words or phrases)	3 or more high-quality modifiers	54.8%	ACCEPTABLE: Actual achievement corresponds approximately with what is expected.	B.1.	3 or more high-quality modifiers	54.1%
	2 high-quality modifiers	16.6%			2 high-quality modifiers	19.9%
	1 high-quality modifier	15.1%			1 high-quality modifier	15.7%
	Other, including no high-quality modifiers	11.2%			Other	1-.3%
				2.	3 or more high-quality modifiers	55.4%
					2 high-quality modifiers	13.2%
					1 high quality modifier	14.4%
					Other	12.1%

GRADE 6 PART I CLUSTER IV: SENTENCE WRITING (continued) NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 1344

Objective	Scale Categories	Per Cent of Students Obtaining Each Category: Mean for Two Items	Achievement Interpretation for Objectives	Item Performance		
				Item	Scale Categories	Per Cent of Students Obtaining Each Category
C. Misplaced Modifiers	Correctly placed modifiers	63.3%	ACCEPTABLE: Actual achievement corresponds approximately with what is expected.	C.1.	Correctly placed modifiers	65.6%
	Incorrectly placed modifiers	30.7%			Incorrectly placed modifiers	28.9%
	Other	6.1%			Other	5.6%
				2.	Correctly placed modifiers	60.9%
					Incorrectly placed modifiers	32.4%
					Other	6.6%
D. Compound Subject --combining two similar sentences	Correctly used compound subject	52.3%	ACCEPTABLE: Actual achievement corresponds approximately with what is expected.	D.1.	Correctly combined	54.4%
	Incorrectly used compound subject	3.1%			Incorrectly used compound subject	0.3%
	Combined correctly without using a compound subject	34.5%			Correctly combined (without compound subject)	35.9%
	Incorrectly combined	8.1%			Incorrectly combined	7.6%
	Other	2.0%			Other	1.8%
				2.	Correctly combined	50.2%
					Incorrectly used compound subject	5.8%
					Correctly combined (without compound subject)	33.1%
					Incorrectly combined	8.6%
					Other	2.2%

GRADE 6 PART I CLUSTER IV: SENTENCE WRITING (continued) NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 1344

Objective	Scale Categories	Per Cent of Students Obtaining Each Category: Mean for Two Items	Achievement Interpretation for Objective	Item Performance		
				Item	Scale Categories	Per Cent of Students Obtaining Each Category
E. Parallel Structure	Correct parallelism Incorrect parallelism Other	5.9% 88.0% 6.1%	UNSATISFACTORY: Actual achievement is well below what is expected. This is considered to be an area of weakness and remediation is deemed necessary.	E.1.	Correct parallelism Incorrect parallelism Other	3.8% 89.8% 6.4%
				2.	Correct parallelism Incorrect parallelism Other	8.0% 86.2% 5.8%
F. Sentence Patterns	Correct--directions followed Incorrect--directions not followed Other	46.3% 47.6% 6.2%	ACCEPTABLE: Actual achievement corresponds approximately with what is expected.	F.1.	Correct--directions followed Incorrect--directions not followed Other	62.2% 33.1% 4.7%
				2.	Correct--directions followed Incorrect--directions not followed Other	30.3% 62.1% 7.6%

GRADE 6 PART I CLUSTER IV: SENTENCE WRITING (continued) NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 1344

Objective	Scale Categories	Per Cent of Students Obtaining Each Category Mean for Two Items	Achievement Interpretation for Objective	Item Performance		
				Item	Scale Categories	Per Cent of Students Obtaining Each Category
G. Inverted Order	Correct--necessary corrections made	35.1%	UNSATISFACTORY: Actual achievement is well below what is expected. This is considered to be an area of weakness and remediation is deemed necessary.	G.1.	Correct--necessary corrections made	37.5%
	Incorrect--necessary corrections not made	52.7%			Incorrect--necessary corrections not made	51.7%
	Other	12.3%			Other	10.8%
				2.	Correct--necessary corrections made	32.7%
					Incorrect--necessary corrections not made	53.6%
					Other	13.8%
H. Correcting run-on sentences	Correct without change in meaning	49.6%	ACCEPTABLE: Actual achievement corresponds approximately with what is expected.	H.1.	Correct without change in meaning	73.5%
	Correct but meaning changed	14.5%			Correct but meaning changed	3.9%
	Other	10.9%			Incorrect	12.4%
					Other	10.2%
				2.	Correct without change in meaning	25.6%
					Correct but meaning changed	25.0%
					Incorrect	37.9%
					Other	11.5%

Summary of the Grade 6 Results

The grade 6 test assessed writing skills by two types of tasks, one involving a written product and the other involving specific skills responses. The written product was scored holistically and according to ten descriptive scales.

Written product: Holistic scoring. Grade 6 students were requested to select from three story beginnings and write a story continuing from the selected beginning. The stories were rated holistically by two scorers according to the Holistic Marking Scale:

Highly Impressive	- well above average in thought, sentence structure and word choice, mostly free from error.
Commendable	- in command of thought, sentence structure and word choice, relatively free from error.
Questionable	- probably functional in terms of thought and sentence structure, but in need of instruction.
Minimal	- in need of remediation--frustration level.
Insufficient Material	

Of the 1,344 student stories scored, 21.5% were considered "Commendable" or "Highly Impressive" by both scorers. An additional 21.2% were rated "Commendable" by one scorer and "Questionable" by the other. A total of 55.7% of stories were considered "Questionable" or "Minimal" by both scorers. Thus, 55.7% of students were considered in need of some instruction on the basis of their story writing. Only 7.5% of students (part of the 55.7%) were considered "Minimal", or in need of considerable assistance, by both scorers. The remaining 1.6% of stories were too limited to permit scoring.

Written product: Descriptive scoring. The grade 6 stories were rated by one scorer on ten descriptive scales. Performance on each descriptive scale was further evaluated by the Interpretation Panel according to the following scale:

Achievement Interpretation Scale

Highly Satisfactory: Actual achievement is well beyond what is expected. This is considered to be an area of strength.

Satisfactory: Actual achievement is somewhat beyond what is expected.

Acceptable: Actual achievement corresponds approximately with what is expected.

Marginal: Actual achievement is somewhat below what is expected, but not to the point of being totally unacceptable. This is considered to be an area where some additional work is considered desirable.

Unsatisfactory: Actual achievement is well below what is expected. This is considered to be an area of weakness and remediation is deemed necessary.

The Interpretation Panel rated performance of grade 6 students on the scale "Logical Organization" as "Highly Satisfactory"; this aspect was considered an area of strength. Performance on four scales was interpreted as "Satisfactory", and on the remaining five as "Acceptable". Thus, one strength and no distinct weaknesses were discovered in the student writing.

Table 6

Grade 6 Written Product: Interpretations of Descriptive Ratings

Descriptive Scale	Interpretation
1. Development of Topic	Satisfactory
2. Descriptive and Precise Vocabulary	Satisfactory
3. Logical Organization	Highly Satisfactory
4. Character, Setting, Plot	Acceptable
5. Variety in Sentence Patterns	Acceptable
6. Correct Usage	Acceptable
7. Paragraph Format	Acceptable
8. Complete Sentences	Acceptable
9. Punctuation and Capitalization	Satisfactory
10. Spelling	Satisfactory

Specific skills. In total 34 objectives were assessed as specific skills. These were grouped within the clusters of spelling, capitalization, punctuation, basic structure, and sentence writing. Performance on each objective was evaluated by the Interpretation Panel according to the Achievement Interpretation Scale.

Student performance on 14 of the 34 objectives was interpreted as "Acceptable"; of these, four were in spelling, one in capitalization, three in punctuation, and six in sentence writing. Of the eight objectives in basic structure, performance on three was interpreted as "Satisfactory", and on four was interpreted as "Highly Satisfactory". The latter four were considered areas of strength; they are: "Use of associated verbs", "Use of pronoun and antecedent", "Use of negatives", and "Use of homonyms". Performance on one objective in spelling, "Spelling of silent letters", was also interpreted as "Highly Satisfactory"; this skill was considered an area of strength as well.

Table 7

Grade 6 Specific Skills: Number of Objectives Receiving Each Interpretation

Clusters of Objectives	Achievement Interpretation Scale					Numbers of Objectives Tested
	Unsatis-factory	Marginal	Acceptable	Satis-factory	Highly Satis-factory	
Spelling	1	1	4		1	7
Capitalization	2	3	1			6
Punctuation	1	1	3			5
Basic Structure		1		3	4	8
Sentence Writing	2		6			8
Total Number of Objectives						34

Performance on one spelling, three capitalization, one punctuation, and one basic structure objective was interpreted as "Marginal". Performance was interpreted as "Unsatisfactory" on six objectives in all; these objectives were considered areas of weakness: "Spelling of possessives", "Capitalizing first word of a quotation" and "Capitalizing name of an organization or institution", "Use of commas in a direct address", and "Use of parallel structure in sentences" and "Use of inverted order in sentences".

GRADE 9 RESULTS

The clusters of skills assessed at the grade 9 level are spelling, capitalization, punctuation, sentence writing, business letter, and paragraph (holistic and descriptive scales). A number of objectives are identified for all clusters except spelling, which is treated as a single objective although actually it is a conglomerate of objectives. Each objective has a number of test items corresponding to it.

The average performance of students on each test item is given. The results of appropriate items are combined and an average performance for each objective is presented. Results for objectives are combined to form an "overall" score for each cluster which is also presented. Performance is indicated as a "percentage correct" for items which are either "correct" or "incorrect", and as the "percentage of students achieving each category" for items with scales of more than correct-incorrect categories (e.g., holistic scale). Performance on most objectives and clusters is also indicated as a "mean" (arithmetic average) with the "maximum possible" given in the next column.

Interpretations of performance on each objective by the Interpretation Panel are provided adjacent to the performance. Interpretations were on the scale: Highly Satisfactory, Satisfactory, Acceptable, Marginal, Unsatisfactory. Each rating is accompanied by the definition of that rating. It is important to note that lower levels of performance on some objectives may be considered "Acceptable", and that the same level of performance may be rated "Minimal" on one objective and "Satisfactory" on another. This is because some objectives and items are more difficult than others, and student performance on these cannot be expected to be as high as on others.

Detailed results. The format for presentation of detailed grade 9 results is tabular. An example is given below for an objective in capitalization and for a descriptive rating of the business letter (one of the written products).

The third objective in the capitalization cluster involved capitalization of the pronoun "I" in sentences. There were three scored occurrences of this in the passage presented to students. Of the 1,475 students, 93.6% capitalized the first scored occurrence of "I" in this passage, 92.2% capitalized the second, and 83.8% capitalized the third. The average for the three items was 89.9% (or 2.70 out of a maximum of 3). This was rated by the Interpretation Panel as "Acceptable" performance by grade 9 students for these items.

CLUSTER: CAPITALIZATION

Objective	Mean Percentage	Achievement Interpretation for Objective	Item Performance	
			Items Keyed to Objectives	Per Cent of Students Obtaining Item Correct
3. Pronoun "I"	89.9%	ACCEPTABLE	12. 19. 20.	93.6% 92.2% 83.8%

The business letter was assessed according to three scales, one of which was "Mechanics". The scale categories for "Mechanics" are 4, 3, and 2 (1 is actually "Insufficient Evidence"), and the percentage of students receiving each of these categories was 21.0%, 40.3%, and 32.4% respectively. The mean performance was 2.88 on the scale from 2 to 4. The Interpretation Panel considered this performance "Acceptable".

CLUSTER: WRITTEN PRODUCT--PARAGRAPH

Descriptive Marking Scales		Per Cent of Students Obtaining Each Score	Mean Performance	Achievement Interpretation for objective
Objective	Scale			
3. Mechanics	4 3 2 1	21.0% 40.3% 32.4% 6.3%	2.88	ACCEPTABLE

GRADE 9 PART II CLUSTER: WRITTEN PRODUCT--PARAGRAPH NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 1475

(DIRECTIONS: Choose ONE of the following topics and write ONE PARAGRAPH ONLY. Your paragraph may be written in either a comic or serious vein.)

Holistic Scoring

HOLISTIC MARKING SCALE

5 = Highly Impressive	- well above average in thought, sentence structure and word choice, mostly free from error.
4 = Commendable	- in command of thought, sentence structure and word choice, relatively free from error.
3 = Questionable	- Probably functional in terms of thought and sentence structure but in need of instruction.
2 = Minimal	- in need of remediation--frustration level.
1 = Insufficient material	

Each paragraph was scored by two markers. If there was a difference of more than one, the paragraph was scored by a third marker. Each paragraph was then given a combined holistic score based on one of the following:

a) If 2 scorers were used

FIRST SCORE + SECOND SCORE = COMBINED SCORE (Maximum 10)

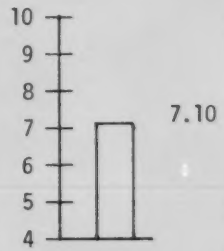
b) If 3 scorers were used

$$\frac{\text{FIRST SCORE + SECOND SCORE}}{2} + \text{THIRD SCORE} = \text{COMBINED SCORE (Maximum 10)}$$

Paragraphs received scores ranging from a high of 10 (both scorers awarded a 5, Highly Impressive) to a low of 4 (both scorers awarded a 2, Minimal). A score of 2 means that the paragraph was not long enough to permit a judgement.

GRADE 9 PART II CLUSTER: WRITTEN PRODUCT--PARAGRAPH (continued) NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 1475

Holistic Scoring (continued)

Holistic Marking Scale	Combined Score	Per Cent of Students Obtaining Each Score	Mean Performance
Highly Impressive - well above average in thought, sentence structure and word choice, mostly free from error.	10	4.4%	
	9	10.6%	
Commendable:- in command of thought, sentence structure and word choice, relatively free from error.	8	21.8%	
	7	24.7%	
Questionable - probably functional in terms of thought, sentence structure, and word choice but in need of instruction.	6	24.3%	
	5	6.3%	
Minimal - in need of remediation--frustration level.	4	3.4%	
Insufficient Material.	2	4.4%	

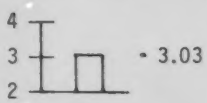
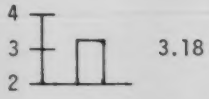
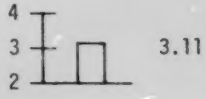
(Interpretation of the holistic score results was not necessary since holistic scoring is based on interpretative ratings.)

GRADE 9 PART II CLUSTER: WRITTEN PRODUCT--PARAGRAPH (continued) NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 1475

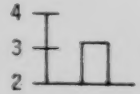
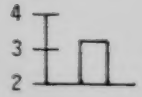
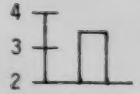
Descriptive Scoring

Descriptive Marking Scales		Per Cent of Students Obtaining Each Score	Mean Performance	Achievement Interpretation for Objective
Objective	Scale			
1. Focus on topic	4 = Ideas relate to assigned topic 3 = Fluctuation but focus is on assigned topic 2 = Deviates from topic or doesn't write on assigned topic 1 = Insufficient evidence	58.5% 26.6% 12.6% 2.3%	4 3 2 3.47	HIGHLY SATISFACTORY: Actual achievement is well beyond what is expected. This is considered to be an area of strength.
2. Topic Development	4 = Originality of ideas creates impact 3 = Ideas ordinary and functional 2 = Insufficient number of ideas 1 = Insufficient evidence	20.9% 61.2% 16.0% 1.9%	4 3 2 3.05	SATISFACTORY: Actual achievement is somewhat beyond what is expected.
3. Organization	4 = Well-organized, coherent, unified paragraphs 3 = Conveys idea but coherence and unity weak 2 = Lacks coherence and unity 1 = Insufficient evidence	35.6% 47.1% 13.9% 3.4%	4 3 2 3.22	SATISFACTORY: Actual achievement is somewhat beyond what is expected.

GRADE 9 PART II CLUSTER: WRITTEN PRODUCT--PARAGRAPH (continued) NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 1475

Descriptive Marking Scales		Per Cent of Students Obtaining Each Score	Mean Performance	Achievement Interpretation for Objective
Objective	Scale			
4. Word choice	4 = Word choice correct and appropriate	18.2%	 3.03	SATISFACTORY: Actual achievement is somewhat beyond what is expected.
	3 = Word choice ordinary and functional	64.1%		
	2 = Word choice restricted	15.4%		
	1 = Insufficient evidence	2.3%		
5. Usage	4 = Usage attracts little or no attention	34.6%	 3.18	HIGHLY SATISFACTORY: Actual achievement is well beyond what is expected. This is considered to be an area of strength.
	3 = Few errors which do not detract from impact	26.6%		
	2 = Errors detract from readability and impression	12.6%		
	1 = Insufficient evidence	2.3%		
6. Sentence structure	4 = Sentences are complete and well-constructed	32.7%	 3.11	SATISFACTORY: Actual achievement is somewhat beyond what is expected.
	3 = Sentences are complete and awkward (2 or more)	42.9%		
	2 = Sentences are imcomplete or run-on (2 or more)	32.7%		
	1 = Insufficient evidence	2.5%		

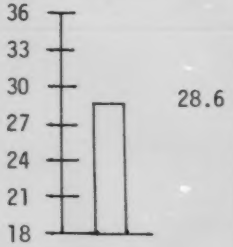
GRADE 9 PART II CLUSTER: WRITTEN PRODUCT--PARAGRAPH (continued) NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 1475

Descriptive Marking Scales		Per Cent of Students Obtaining Each Score	Mean Performance	Achievement Interpretation for Objective
Objective	Scale			
7. Variety in sentence structure	4 = Good variety in sentence structure	21.9%	 3.10	ACCEPTABLE: Actual achievement corresponds approximately with what is expected.
	3 = Some variety in sentence structure	42.9%		
	2 = No variety in sentence structure	32.7%		
	1 = Insufficient evidence	2.5%		
8. Punctuation and capitalization	4 = Punctuation and capitalization attracts little or no attention	40.0%	 3.22	SATISFACTORY: Actual achievement is somewhat beyond what is expected.
	3 = Few errors which do not detract from impact	39.1%		
	2 = Errors detract from readability and impression	18.8%		
	1 = Insufficient evidence	2.1%		
9. Spelling	4 = Spelling attracts little or no attention	49.4%	 3.36	HIGHLY SATISFACTORY: Actual achievement is well beyond what is expected. This is considered to be an area of strength.
	3 = Few errors which do not detract from impact	33.9%		
	2 = Errors detract from readability and impression	14.0%		
	1 = Insufficient evidence	2.7%		

GRADE 9 PART II CLUSTER: WRITTEN PRODUCT--PARAGRAPH (continued) NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 1475

Descriptive Scoring (continued)

By adding up the scores for each paragraph, it was possible to assign each one an overall score. Overall scoring ranged from a maximum of 36 (the paragraph received a score of 4 on each descriptive scale) to a low of 18 (the paragraph received a score of 2 on each of the scales). A mark of 9 would simply mean that the paragraph was not long enough to permit a judgement, and therefore received a mark of 1 on each descriptive scale.

Overall Score on Descriptive Scales	Per Cent of Students Obtaining Each Overall Score	Mean Performance
34 - 36	13.2%	
31 - 33	19.4%	
28 - 30	27.7%	
25 - 27	21.0%	
22 - 24	11.8%	
19 - 21	3.6%	
16 - 18	1.7%	
9 (Insufficient evidence)	1.6%	

GRADE 9 PART II CLUSTER: WRITTEN PRODUCT--BUSINESS LETTER NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 1475

(*DIRECTIONS: Write a business letter using the situation as given.*)

Ned Nelson lives at 17 Palmer Street in Brandon, Manitoba. He is ordering a silver mug (Catalogue #2498) for his father. He wants to have the name Fred Nelson engraved on it. He is ordering the mug from:

KLIPPO COMPANY
1040 Clare Street
Montreal, Quebec
T4N 1X7

The cost of the mug is $9.95 plus $1.00 for the engraving.)

Scoring

The following three scales were used in marking the letters.

MARKING SCALE--FORMAT

5 = Correct format
4 = Incorrect format (1 or 2 errors)
3 = Incorrect format (3 or 4 errors)
2 = Incorrect format (more than 4 errors)
1 = Insufficient evidence

MARKING SCALE--CONTENT

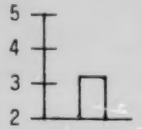
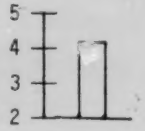
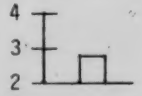
5 = Purpose achieved - clearly outlines the request--includes all information.
4 = Purpose achieved - reader must infer some information or organization confusing.
3 = Purpose achieved - questionable--essential information omitted or incorrect--misleading because of poor organization
2 = Purpose not achieved
1 = Insufficient evidence

MARKING SCALE--MECHANICS

4 = Mechanics attracts little or no attention.
3 = Few errors which do not detract from correctness.
2 = Errors detract from correctness and impression.
1 = Insufficient evidence (parts missing).

GRADE 9 PART II CLUSTER: WRITTEN PRODUCT--BUSINESS LETTER (continued) NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 1475

Scoring (continued)

Descriptive Marking Scales		Per Cent of Students Obtaining Each Score	Mean Performance	Achievement Interpretation for Objective
Objective	Scale			
1. Format	5 = Correct format	7.6%	 3.16	UNSATISFACTORY: Actual achievement is well below what is expected. This is considered to be an area of weakness and remediation is deemed necessary.
	4 = Incorrect format (1 or 2 errors)	26.3%		
	3 = Incorrect format (3 or 4 errors)	34.2%		
	2 = Incorrect format (more than 4 errors)	27.8%		
	1 = Insufficient evidence	4.1%		
2. Content	5 = Purpose achieved	43.0%	 4.12	ACCEPTABLE: Actual achievement corresponds approximately with what is expected.
	4 = Reader must infer some information	29.3%		
	3 = Questionable--essential information omitted or incorrect	20.0%		
	2 = Purpose not achieved	4.6%		
	1 = Insufficient evidence	3.1%		
3. Mechanics	4 = Mechanics attracts little or no attention	21.0%	 2.80	ACCEPTABLE: Actual achievement corresponds approximately with what is expected.
	3 = Few errors which do not detract from correctness.	40.3%		
	2 = Errors detract from correctness and impression.	32.4%		
	1 = Insufficient evidence (parts missing).	6.3%		

GRADE 9 PART I CLUSTER 1: SPELLING NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 1475

(I. *DIRECTIONS: In each of the spaces provided, write the word which is dictated by the teacher.*)

Note: Spelling items were not keyed to objectives.

	Achievement on Spelling			Achievement Interpretation for Spelling
	Mean Percentage	Score Mean	Score Maximum	
OVERALL (Items 1 to 30)	61.7%	18.50	30.0	ACCEPTABLE: Actual achievement corresponds approximately with what is expected.

Item Performance	
Items	Per Cent of Students Obtaining Item Correct
1. parliament	59.5%
2. athletics	79.8%
3. environment	45.5%
4. government	84.7%
5. instinct	83.9%
6. secretary	74.0%
7. tragedy	61.8%
8. mathematics	74.6%
9. assistance	76.1%
10. adolescent	37.2%

Item Performance	
Items	Per Cent of Students Obtaining Item Correct
11. miscellaneous	23.9%
12. rhythm	22.5%
13. condemned	46.4%
14. conscious	43.8%
15. dessert	58.7%
16. humane	71.7%
17. pamphlet	60.5%
18. photograph	83.0%
19. provincial	77.2%
20. knowledge	82.5%

Item Performance	
Items	Per Cent of Students Obtaining Item Correct
21. embarrass	32.9%
22. abbreviate	34.8%
23. physical	84.0%
24. parallel	56.2%
25. rectangle	89.0%
26. exaggerate	31.8%
27. innocent	64.8%
28. illegal	78.9%
29. quarterback	82.9%
30. sincerely	47.0%

GRADE 9 PART I CLUSTER II: PUNCTUATION and CAPITALIZATION NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 1475

(II. DIRECTIONS: *The CAPITAL LETTERS and PUNCTUATION MARKS are missing in the following paragraphs. Find each mistake and make the correction. DO NOT REWRITE.*)

Capitalization

Objective	Achievement on Objective			Achievement Interpretation for Objective	Item Performance	
	Mean Percentage	Score			Items Keyed to Objectives	Per Cent of Students Obtaining Item Correct
		Mean	Maximum			
1. First word of a Direct Quotation	81.8%	2.45	3.0	ACCEPTABLE: Actual achievement corresponds approximately with what is expected.	6. 16. 27.	95.4% 90.7% 59.2%
2. Proper Noun (caution: only one item for this objective.)	47.5%	0.53	1.0	UNSATISFACTORY: Actual achievement is well below what is expected. This is considered to be an area of weakness and remediation is deemed necessary.	5.	47.5%
3. Pronoun "I"	90.0%	2.70	3.0	ACCEPTABLE: Actual achievement corresponds approximately with what is expected.	12. 19. 20.	93.6% 92.2% 83.8%
OVERALL (7 items on capitalization)	80.4%	5.63	7.0			

GRADE 9 PART I CLUSTER II: PUNCTUATION and CAPITALIZATION (continued) NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 1475

Punctuation

Objective	Achievement on Objectives			Achievement Interpretation for Objective	Item Performance	
	Mean Percentage	Score			Items Keyed to Objectives	Per Cent of Students Obtaining Item Correct
		Mean	Maximum			
1. Quotation marks in dialogue	72.4%	2.17	3.0	ACCEPTABLE: Actual achievement corresponds approximately with what is expected.	1. 4. 22.	80.1% 73.7% 63.3%
2. Apostrophes in ~~quotations~~ CONTRACTIONS	48.8%	1.96	4.0	UNSATISFACTORY: Actual achievement is well below what is expected. This is considered to be an area of weakness and remediation is deemed necessary.	2. 13. 15. 30.	51.5% 55.9% 66.3% 21.7%
3. Comma--clauses	33.9%	1.01	3.0	UNSATISFACTORY: Actual achievement is well below what is expected. This is considered to be an area of weakness and remediation is deemed necessary.	14. 25. 28.	43.4% 16.2% 42.0%
4. Comma in dialogue	72.0%	2.88	4.0	ACCEPTABLE: Actual achievement corresponds approximately with what is expected.	3. 10. 21. 26.	80.2% 70.5% 64.0% 73.2%

GRADE 9 PART I CLUSTER II: PUNCTUATION and CAPITALIZATION (continued) NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 1475

Punctuation (continued)

Objective	Achievement on Objective			Achievement Interpretation for Objective	Item Performance	
	Mean Percentage	Score			Items Keyed to Objectives	Per Cent of Students Obtaining Items Correct
		Mean	Maximum			
5. Comma after introductory words	31.1%	0.93	3.0	UNSATISFACTORY: Actual achievement is well below what is expected. This is considered to be an area of weakness and remediation is deemed necessary.	8. 18. 23.	27.7% 30.7% 35.1%
6. Comma in a series (caution: only one item for this objective.)	83.3%	0.83	1.0	SATISFACTORY: Actual achievement is somewhat beyond what is expected.	9.	83.3%
7. End punctuation--(period, question mark, exclamation mark)	62.7%	3.14	5.0	UNSATISFACTORY: Actual achievement is well below what is expected. This is considered to be an area of weakness and remediation is deemed necessary.	7. 11. 17. 24. 29.	56.9% 94.0% 53.6% 51.7% 57.3%
OVERALL (23 items on punctuation)	57.7%	12.92	23.0			
OVERALL (Items 1 to 30 on punctuation and capitalization	62.3%	18.60	30.0			

GRADE 9 PART I CLUSTER III: SENTENCE WRITING NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 1475

(III. DIRECTIONS: *Read the directions for each of the following sections. Write sentences using the given directions.*)

Objective	Scale Categories	Per Cent of Students Obtaining Each Category: Mean for Four Items	Achievement Interpretation for Objective	Item Performance		
				Item	Scale Categories	Per Cent of Students Obtaining Each Category
A. Sentence Combining (using subordination)	Correctly combined--subordinating clauses or phrases, no meaning change	1.9%	SATISFACTORY: Actual achievement is somewhat beyond what is expected.	A.1.	Correctly combined	37.7%
					Correctly combined--used conjunctions	29.2%
					Error in combining	32.5%
	Correctly combined--used conjunctions, awkward or meaning change	26.7%		2.	Correctly combined	42.4%
					Correctly combined--used conjunctions	29.4%
					Error in combining	27.7%
	Error in combining--run-on, incomplete or two errors	27.8%		3.	Correctly combined	35.3%
					Correctly combined--used conjunctions	32.7%
					Error in combining	31.5%
				4.	Correctly combined	64.1%
					Correctly combined--used conjunctions	15.3%
					Error in combining	19.5%

GRADE 9 PART I CLUSTER III: SENTENCE WRITING (continued) NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 1475

Objective	Scale Categories	Per Cent of Students Obtaining Each Category: Mean for Four Items	Achievement Interpretation for Objective	Item Performance		
				Item	Scale Categories	Per Cent of Students Obtaining Each Category
B. Sentence Expansion (write complete sentences using sentence fragments)	Complete sentence Incomplete sentence Other	64.3% 33.7% 2.0%	ACCEPTABLE: Actual achievement corresponds approximately with what is expected.	B.1.	Complete sentence Incomplete sentence Other	44.2% 51.9% 3.9%
				2.	Complete sentence Incomplete sentence Other	77.2% 21.7% 1.1%
				3.	Complete sentence Incomplete sentence Other	77.9% 20.6% 1.5%
				4.	Complete sentence Incomplete sentence Other	58.0% 40.7% 1.3%

GRADE 9 PART I CLUSTER III: SENTENCE WRITING (continued) NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 1475

Objective	Scale Categories	Per Cent of Students Obtaining Each Category: Mean for Four Items	Achievement Interpretation for Objective	Item Performance		
				Item	Scale Categories	Per Cent of Students Obtaining Each Category
C. Sentence Revision (run-on sentences)	Correct without change in meaning (punctuation and capitalization correct)	62.4%	ACCEPTABLE: Actual achievement corresponds approximately with what is expected.	C.1.	Correct	67.4%
	Correct but punctuation and/or capitalization incorrect	16.0%			Correct (but punctuation and/or capitalization incorrect)	12.0%
	Incorrect	19.9%			Incorrect	19.9%
	Other	1.8%			Other	0.7%
				2.	Correct	52.9%
					Correct (but punctuation and/or capitalization incorrect)	20.2%
					Incorrect	24.7%
					Other	2.1%
				3.	Correct	61.3%
					Correct (but punctuation and/or capitalization incorrect	18.5%
					Incorrect	17.9%
					Other	2.3%
				4.	Correct	67.8%
					Correct (but punctuation and/or capitalization incorrect)	13.3%
					Incorrect	16.9%
					Other	2.0%

Summary of the Grade 9 Results

The first part of the grade 9 test included the specific skills and the second part contained both written products, the business letter and the paragraph. The business letter was scored on three descriptive scales whereas the paragraph was scored holistically and according to nine descriptive scales.

Written product: Paragraph--holistic scoring. Students were directed to select one topic from a list of four and to write a single paragraph pertaining to it. Two scorers scored the paragraph according to the Holistic Marking Scale:

Highly Impressive	- well above average in thought, sentence structure and word choice, mostly free from error.
Commendable	- in command of thought, sentence structure and word choice, relatively free from error.
Questionable	- probably functional in terms of thought and sentence structure, but in need of instruction.
Minimal	- in need of remediation--frustration level.
Insufficient Material	

Of the 1,475 student paragraphs scored, 36.8% were considered "Highly Impressive" or "Commendable" by both scorers. An additional 24.7% were rated "Commendable" by one scorer and "Questionable" by the other. A total of 34.0% were considered "Questionable" and "Minimal" by both scorers. Thus, 34.0% of students were considered in need of some instruction on the basis of their paragraph writing. Only 3.4% of students (part of the 34.0%) were considered "Minimal", or in need of considerable assistance, by both scorers. The remaining 4.5% of paragraphs were too limited to permit scoring.

Written product: Paragraph--descriptive scoring. The grade 9 paragraphs were rated by one scorer on nine descriptive scales. Performance on each scale was further evaluated by the Interpretation Panel according to the following scale:

Achievement Interpretation Scale

Highly Satisfactory: Actual achievement is well beyond what is expected. This is considered to be an area of strength.

Satisfactory: Actual achievement is somewhat beyond what is expected.

Acceptable: Actual achievement corresponds approximately with what is expected.

Marginal: Actual achievement is somewhat below what is expected, but not to the point of being totally unacceptable. This is considered to be an area where some additional work is considered desirable.

Unsatisfactory: Actual achievement is well below what is expected. This is considered to be an area of weakness and remediation is deemed necessary.

The Interpretation Panel considered performance on one of the nine descriptive scales as "Acceptable"; the remaining eight were rated as "Satisfactory" or "Highly Satisfactory". Those rated "Highly Satisfactory" were considered areas of strength; they are: "Focus on topic", "Usage", and "Spelling". No distinct weaknesses were discovered.

Table 8

Grade 9 Paragraph: Interpretation of Descriptive Ratings

Descriptive Scale	Interpretation
1. Focus on Topic	Highly Satisfactory
2. Topic Development	Satisfactory
3. Organization	Satisfactory
4. Word Choice	Satisfactory
5. Usage	Highly Satisfactory
6. Sentence Structure	Satisfactory
7. Variety in Sentence Patterns	Acceptable
8. Punctuation and Capitalization	Satisfactory
9. Spelling	Highly Satisfactory

Written product: Business letter. Grade 9 students were asked to write a business letter involving the purchase of a gift. The letter was scored by one person on three scales: "Format", "Content", and "Mechanics". Student performance on each scale was evaluated by the Interpretation Panel according to the Achievement Interpretation Scale.

Performance on the "Content" and "Mechanics" scales was interpreted as "Acceptable". On the "Format" scale performance was interpreted as "Unsatisfactory"; this aspect was considered an area of weakness.

Specific skills. There were 14 objectives tested in the specific skills portion of the test. The clusters of skills are spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and sentence writing. Spelling was not keyed to objectives; performance on spelling was rated on an overall basis by the Interpretation Panel. Performance on each objective as well was rated by the Panel according to the Achievement Interpretation Scale.

Performance on spelling was rated as "Acceptable". Performance on six additional objectives was also rated "Acceptable". Performance on one punctuation and one sentence writing objective was rated as "Satisfactory". There were no performances rated as "Highly Satisfactory".

Table 9

Grade 9 Specific Skills: Number of Objectives Receiving Each Interpretation

Clusters of objectives	Achievement Interpretation Scale					Numbers of Objectives Tested
	Unsatis-factory	Marginal	Acceptable	Satis-factory	Highly Satis-factory	
Spelling (overall)			1			1
Capitalization	1		2			3
Punctuation	4		2	1		7
Sentence Writing			2	1		3
				Total Number of Objectives		14

No performances were rated as "Marginal". Performance on one capitalization objective, "Capitalizes proper nouns", was rated as "Unsatisfactory"; this is considered an area of weakness (caution is necessary since only one item was used for this objective).

Four punctuation objectives were rated as "Unsatisfactory"; these are considered areas of weakness. They are: "Use of apostrophes in quotations", "Use of commas between clauses", "Use of commas after introductory words", and "Use of end punctuation".

GRADE 12 RESULTS

The clusters of skills assessed at the grade 12 level are spelling, capitalization, punctuation, basic structure, and written product (holistic and descriptive scales). A number of objectives are identified for all clusters except spelling, which is treated as a single objective although actually it is a conglomerate of objectives. Each objective has a number of test items corresponding to it.

The average performance of students on each test item is given. The results of appropriate items are combined to obtain average performance for each objective, which are given. Results for objectives are combined to form an "overall" score for each cluster, which is also reported. Performance is indicated as a "percentage correct" for items which are either "correct" or "incorrect", and as the "percentage of students achieving each category" for items with scales of more than correct-incorrect categories (e.g., holistic scale). Performance on most objectives and clusters is also indicated as a "mean" (arithmetic average) with the "maximum possible" given in the next column.

Results of the interpretations of performance by the Interpretation Panel are provided adjacent to the performance. Interpretations were on the scale: Highly Satisfactory, Satisfactory, Acceptable, Marginal, Unsatisfactory. Each rating is accompanied by the definition of that rating. It is important to note that lower levels of performance on some objectives may be considered "Acceptable", and that the same level of performance may be rated "Satisfactory" on one objective and "Minimal" on another. This is because some objectives and items are more difficult than others, and student performance on these cannot be expected to be as high as on others.

Detailed results. The format for presentation of detailed grade 12 results is tabular and is identical for English 300 and 301 students. An example is given below for an objective in capitalization and for a descriptive rating of the written product.

One of the objectives in the capitalization cluster involves the capitalizing and underlining of book titles; the actual items used for the assessment are numbers 40 and 47 in the "Capitalization and punctuation" passage. Of the 467 English 300 students, 90.4% of them correctly answered item 40 and 87.6% correctly answered item 47. The average performance on the two items combined is 89.0% (or a mean of 1.78 out of a maximum of 2). This was rated by the Interpretation Panel as "Acceptable" performance for English 300 students.

12--300 CLUSTER: CAPITALIZATION

Objective	Mean Percentage	Achievement Interpretation for Objective	Item Performance	
			Items Keyed to Objective	Per Cent of Students Obtaining Item Correct
4. Titles	89.0%	ACCEPTABLE	40. 47.	90.4% 87.6%

The written product was assessed holistically and according to eight descriptive scales. The third descriptive scale involved "Purpose", (note that there are no actual items corresponding to the descriptive scales). The scale categories were 4, 3, and 2 (1 is actually "Insufficient Evidence") and the percentage of English 301 students receiving each of these categories was 24.7%, 53.8%, and 18.3% respectively. The mean performance was 3.07 on the scale from 2 to 4. This performance was considered "Satisfactory" for English 301 students by the Interpretation Panel.

12--301 CLUSTER: WRITTEN PRODUCT

Descriptive Marking Scale		Per Cent of Students Obtaining Each Score	Mean Performance	Achievement Interpretation for Objective
Objective	Scale			
3. Purpose	4	24.7%	3.07	SATISFACTORY
	3	53.8%		
	2	18.3%		
	1	3.5%		

GRADE 12--300 PART II CLUSTER: WRITTEN PRODUCT--ESSAY NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 467

(*DIRECTIONS: Choose ONE topic from EITHER List A or List B. In List A you are given only the title for an essay. In List B you are given the title plus a thesis statement which gives the main idea you are trying to present to the reader. WRITE AN ESSAY ON THE TOPIC YOU HAVE CHOSEN.*)

Holistic Scoring

HOLISTIC MARKING SCALE

5 = Highly Impressive	- well above average in thought, sentence structure and word choice, mostly free from error.
4 = Commendable	- in command of thought, sentence structure and word choice, relatively free from error.
3 = Questionable	- probably functional in terms of thought and sentence structure, but in need of instruction.
2 = Minimal	- in need of remediation--frustration level.
1 = Insufficient material	

Each essay was scored by two scorers. If there was a difference of more than one, the essay was scored by a third scorer. Each essay was then given a combined holistic score based on one of the following:

a) If 2 scorers were used

FIRST SCORE + SECOND SCORE = COMBINED SCORE (Maximum 10)

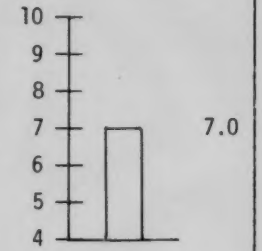
b) If 3 scorers were used

$$\frac{\text{FIRST SCORE + SECOND SCORE}}{2} + \text{THIRD SCORE} = \text{COMBINED SCORE (Maximum 10)}$$

Essays received scores ranging from a high of 10 (both scorers awarded a 5, Highly Impressive) to a low of 4 (both scorers awarded a 2, Minimal). A score of 2 means that the essay was not long enough to permit a judgement.

GRADE 12--300 PART II CLUSTER: WRITTEN PRODUCT--ESSAY (continued) NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 467

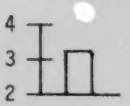
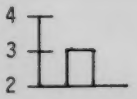
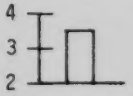
Holistic Scoring (continued)

Holistic Marking Scale	Combined Score	Per Cent of Students Obtaining Each Score	Mean Performance
Highly Impressive - well above average in thought, sentence structure and word choice, mostly free from error.	10	4.9%	
	9	10.5%	
Commendable - in command of thought, sentence structure and word choice, relatively free from error.	8	21.8%	
	7	24.8%	
Questionable - probably functional in terms of though and sentence structure structure but in need of instruction.	6	22.7%	
	5	10.3%	
Minimal - in need of remediation--frustration level.	4	4.5%	
Insufficient material.	2	0.4%	

(Interpretation of the holistic score results was not necessary since holistic scoring is based on interpretative ratings.)

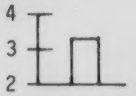
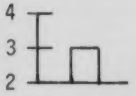
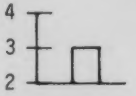
GRADE 12--300 PART II CLUSTER: WRITTEN PRODUCT--ESSAY (continued) NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 467

Descriptive Scoring

Descriptive Marking Scales		Per Cent of Students Obtaining Each Score	Mean Performance	Achievement Interpretation for Objective
Objective	Scale			
1. Interest of Content	4 = Originality and interest of ideas creates impact 3 = Ideas ordinary and functional 2 = Little or no evidence of interesting content 1 = Insufficient evidence	35.3% 51.0% 13.5% 0.2%	 3.22	HIGHLY SATISFACTORY: Actual achievement is well beyond what is expected. This is considered to be an area of strength.
2. Style	4 = Develops effective style 3 = Ordinary and functional style 2 = Does not develop a style 1 = Insufficient evidence	24.2% 60.0% 15.4% 0.4%	 3.09	SATISFACTORY: Actual achievement is somewhat beyond what is expected.
3. Purpose	4 = Writes with a purpose 3 = Usually writes with a purpose 2 = Does not write with a purpose 1 = Insufficient evidence	56.1% 36.0% 6.9% 1.0	 3.50	SATISFACTORY: Actual achievement is somewhat beyond what is expected.

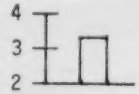
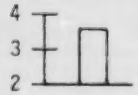
GRADE 12--300 PART II CLUSTER: WRITTEN PRODUCT--ESSAY (continued) NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 467

Descriptive Scoring (continued)

Descriptive Marking Scales		Per Cent of Students Obtaining Each Score	Mean Performance	Achievement Interpretation for Objective
Objective	Scale			
4. Organization of ideas	4 = Ideas appropriately organized by time, place and sequence	49.0%	 3.34	SATISFACTORY: Actual achievement is somewhat beyond what is expected.
	3 = Error in logical organization (one error)	34.3%		
	2 = Error in logical organization (more than one error)	15.2%		
	1 = Insufficient evidence	1.5%		
5. Variety of sentence structure	4 = Positive effect created by varying sentence structures	23.6%	 3.00	HIGHLY SATISFACTORY: Actual achievement is well beyond what is expected. This is considered to be an area of strength.
	3 = Slight positive effect created by varying sentence structures	52.5%		
	2 = No effect created by varying sentence structures	23.8%		
	1 = Insufficient evidence	0.2%		
6. Word choice and usage	4 = Word choice appropriate and correct	26.3%	 3.02	MARGINAL: Actual Achievement is somewhat below what is expected, but not to the point of being totally unacceptable. This is considered to be an area where some additional work is considered desirable.
	3 = Few errors which do not detract from impact	49.3%		
	2 = Errors detract from readability and impression	24.2%		
	1 = Insufficient evidence	0.2%		

GRADE 12--300 PART II CLUSTER: WRITTEN PRODUCT--ESSAY (continued) NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 467

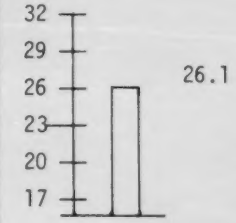
Descriptive Scoring (continued)

Descriptive Marking Scales		Per Cent of Students Obtaining Each Score	Mean Performance	Achievement Interpretation for Objective
Objective	Scale			
7. Punctuation and capitalization	4 = Capitalizes and punctuates correctly (0-2 errors) 3 = Errors in capitalization and punctuation (3-4 errors) 2 = Errors in capitalization and punctuation (more than 4 errors) 1 = Insufficient evidence	54.2% 26.1% 18.6% 1.0%	 3.36	HIGHLY SATISFACTORY: Actual achievement is well beyond what is expected. This is considered to be an area of strength.
8. Spelling	4 = Spelling attracts little or no attention 3 = Few errors which do not detract from impact 2 = Errors detract from readability and impression 1 = Insufficient evidence	68.3% 24.4% 6.0% 1.3%	 3.63	HIGHLY SATISFACTORY: Actual achievement is well beyond what is expected. This is considered to be an area of strength.

GRADE 12--300 PART II CLUSTER: WRITTEN PRODUCT--ESSAY (continued) NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 467

Descriptive Scoring (continued)

By adding up the scores for each essay, it was possible to assign each one an overall score. Overall scoring ranged from a maximum of 36 (the essay received a score of 4 on each descriptive scale) to a low of 18 (the essay received a score of 2 on each of the scales). A mark of 9 would simply mean that the essay was not long enough to permit a judgement, and therefore received a mark of 1 on each descriptive scale.

Overall Score on Descriptive Scales	Per Cent of Students Obtaining Each Overall Score	Mean Performance
30 - 32	19.9%	
27 - 29	29.3%	
24 - 26	24.0%	
21 - 23	18.4%	
18 - 20	7.1%	
15 - 17	0.8%	
8 (Insufficient evidence)	0.4%	

GRADE 12--300 PART I CLUSTER I: SPELLING NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 467

(I. DIRECTIONS: *One word in each group of words is misspelled. Find the misspelled word, underline the word, and spell it correctly in the blank following the group of words.*)

NOTE: Spelling items were not keyed to objectives.

Spelling Scale Categories	Per Cent of Students Obtaining Each Category: Mean for 23 Items[a]	Achievement on Spelling[a] (Based on Two Points per Item)			Achievement Interpretation for Spelling
		Mean Percentage	Score Mean	Score Maximum	
Correct in identification and Spelling	62.4%	67.1%	30.9	46.0	SATISFACTORY: Actual achievement is somewhat beyond what is expected.
Correct in identification but incorrect in spelling	9.4%				
Incorrect in identification	28.2%				

[a]Item 1 was not included as it was unacceptable as a test question, therefore there were 23 acceptable items.

Item	Spelling Scale Categories	Per Cent of Students Obtaining Each Category
1. sympathize[a]		

Item	Spelling Scale Categories	Per Cent of Students Obtaining Each Category
2. imaginable	Correct identification and spelling	67.7%
	Correct identification, incorrect spelling	2.4%
	Incorrect	30.0%

GRADE 12-300 PART I CLUSTER I: SPELLING (continued) NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 467

Item	Spelling Scale Categories	Per Cent of Students Obtaining Each Category
3. grievous	Correct identification and spelling	44.8%
	Correct identification, incorrect spelling	16.1%
	Incorrect	39.2%
5. privilege	Correct identification and spelling	52.7%
	Correct identification, incorrect spelling	42.8%
	Incorrect	4.5%
7. separate	Correct identification and spelling	68.7%
	Correct identification, incorrect spelling	0.4%
	Incorrect	30.4%
9. recommend	Correct identification and spelling	56.1%
	Correct identification, incorrect spelling	4.1%
	Incorrect	39.8%
11. tragedy	Correct identification and spelling	68.1%
	Correct identification, incorrect spelling	3.0%
	Incorrect	28.7%

Item	Spelling Scale Categories	Per Cent of Students Obtaining Each Category
4. prescribe	Correct identification and spelling	55.0%
	Correct identification, incorrect spelling	2.4%
	Incorrect	42.6%
6. niece	Correct identification and spelling	71.7%
	Correct identification, incorrect spelling	1.5%
	Incorrect	26.6%
8. truly	Correct identification and spelling	70.4%
	Correct identification, incorrect spelling	1.5%
	Incorrect	27.8%
10. admissible	Correct identification and spelling	22.1%
	Correct identification, incorrect spelling	15.8%
	Incorrect	61.9%
12. proceed	Correct identification and spelling	67.0%
	Correct identification, incorrect spelling	5.1%
	Incorrect	27.4%

GRADE 12-300 PART I CLUSTER I: SPELLING (continued) NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 467

Item	Spelling Scale Categories	Per Cent of Students Obtaining Each Category
13. parliament	Correct identification and spelling	76.4%
	Correct identification, incorrect spelling	9.0%
	Incorrect	14.3%
15. hindrance	Correct identification and spelling	14.1%
	Correct identification, incorrect spelling	8.4%
	Incorrect	77.3%
17. expense	Correct identification and spelling	80.9%
	Correct identification, incorrect spelling	3.4%
	Incorrect	15.6%
19. requirement	Correct identification and spelling	78.8%
	Correct identification, incorrect spelling	0.6%
	Incorrect	20.6%
21. temperament	Correct identification and spelling	30.8%
	Correct identification, incorrect spelling	10.5%
	Incorrect	58.0%

Item	Spelling Scale Categories	Per cent of Students Obtaining Each Category
14. opening	Correct identification and spelling	85.0%
	Correct identification, incorrect spelling	0.6%
	Incorrect	14.3%
16. disappear	Correct identification and spelling	81.8%
	Correct identification, incorrect spelling	5.4%
	Incorrect	12.4%
18. attendance	Correct identification and spelling	82.4%
	Correct identification, incorrect spelling	0.9%
	Incorrect	16.7%
20. prejudice	Correct identification and spelling	74.9%
	Correct identification, incorrect spelling	10.7%
	Incorrect	13.7%
22. maintenance	Correct identification and spelling	54.4%
	Correct identification, incorrect spelling	30.6%
	Incorrect	15.0%

GRADE 12--300 PART I CLUSTER I: SPELLING (continued) NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 467

Item	Spelling Scales Categories	Per Cent of Students Obtaining Each Category
23. occasion	Correct identification and spelling	46.9%
	Correct identification, incorrect spelling	39.4%
	Incorrect	13.3%

Item	Spelling Scales Categories	Per Cent of Students Obtaining Each Category
24. imaginary	Correct identification and spelling	84.8%
	Correct identification, incorrect spelling	2.6%
	Incorrect	12.4%

GRADE 12--300 PART I CLUSTER II: PUNCTUATION AND CAPITALIZATION NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 467

(II. DIRECTIONS: *The following paragraphs have been written without CAPITAL LETTERS, PUNCTUATION and INDENTATION. Correct the passage by marking in the Capital Letters and Punctuation. Place an X to indicate Indentation of a paragraph.*)

Capitalization

Objective	Achievement on Objective			Achievement Interpretation for Objective	Item Performance	
	Mean Percentage	Score			Items Keyed to Objectives	Per Cent of Students Obtaining Item Correct
		Mean	Maximum			
1. First word in a quotation	82.2%	3.29	4.0	ACCEPTABLE: Actual achievement corresponds approximately with what is expected.	28. 33. 44. 55.	63.8% 88.7% 92.1% 84.2%
2. First word in a sentence	94.0%	5.64	6.0	ACCEPTABLE: Actual achievement corresponds approximately with what is expected.	2. 6. 10. 16. 23. 58.	96.8% 99.4% 97.2% 98.1% 94.9% 77.5%
3. Proper nouns	70.7%	1.41	2.0	MARGINAL: Actual achievement is somewhat below what is expected, but not to the point of being totally unacceptable. This is considered to be an area where some additional work is considered desirable.	3. 17.	69.2% 72.2%

GRADE 12--300 PART I CLUSTER II: PUNCTUATION and CAPITALIZATION (continued) NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 467

Capitalization (continued)

Objective	Achievement on Objective			Achievement Interpretation for Objective	Item Performance	
	Mean Percentage	Score			Items Keyed to Objectives	Per Cent of Students Obtaining Item Correct
		Mean	Maximum			
4. Titles	89.0%	1.78	2.0	ACCEPTABLE: Actual achievement corresponds approximately with what is expected.	40. 47.	90.4% 87.6%
5. Pronoun "I"	96.4%	6.75	7.0	ACCEPTABLE: Actual achievement corresponds approximately with what is expected.	24. 25. 37. 50. 56. 60. 61.	97.4% 98.1% 98.8% 96.1% 96.1% 94.6% 95.7%
OVERALL (21 items on capitalization)	89.9%	18.87	21.0			

93

GRADE 12--300 PART I CLUSTER II: PUNCTUATION and CAPITALIZATION (continued) NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 467

Punctuation

Objective	Achievement on Objective			Achievement Interpretation for Objective	Item Performance	
	Mean Percentage	Score			Items Keyed to Objectives	Per Cent of Students Obtaining Item Correct
		Mean	Maximum			
1. Comma--series	83.0%	1.66	2.0	ACCEPTABLE: Actual achievement corresponds approximately with what is expected.	8. 13.	79.7% 86.3%
2. Comma--in dialogue	78.9%	2.37	3.0	SATISFACTORY: Actual achievement is somewhat beyond what is expected.	26. 34. 62.	79.2% 76.0% 81.4%
3. Comma--parenthetical phrases	47.8%	2.48	5.0	UNSATISFACTORY: Actual achievement is well below what is expected. This is considered to be an area of weakness and remediation is deemed necessary.	11. 18. 20. 38. 48.	21.6% 25.3% 55.7% 57.6% 79.2%
4. Comma--non-restrictive clauses (caution: based on only one item.)	64.5%	0.64	1.0	ACCEPTABLE: Actual achievement corresponds approximately with what is expected.	4.	64.5%

GRADE 12--300 PART I CLUSTER II: PUNCTUATION and CAPITALIZATION (continued) NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 467

Punctuation (continued)

Objective	Achievement on Objective			Achievement Interpretation for Objective	Item Performance	
	Mean Percentage	Score			Items Keyed to Objectives	Per Cent of Students Obtaining Item Correct
		Mean	Maximum			
5. Comma--after introductory words	57.1%	1.14	2.0	MARGINAL: Actual achievement is somewhat below what is expected, but not to the point of being totally unacceptable. This is considered to be an area where some additional work is considered desirable.	55. 59.	58.7% 55.5%
6. Quotation marks--direct quotation	75.5%	3.77	5.0	ACCEPTABLE: Actual achievement corresponds approximately with what is expected.	27. 32. 36. 43. 53.	82.7% 80.3% 68.5% 69.2% 76.7%
7. Colon--beginning of a list	33.2%	0.66	2.0	UNSATISFACTORY: Actual achievement is well below what is expected. This is considered to be an area of weakness and remediation is deemed necessary.	7. 12.	33.6% 32.8%
8. Semi-colon--between coordinate clauses (caution: based on only one item.)	81.2%	0.81	1.0	SATISFACTORY: Actual achievement is somewhat beyond what is expected.	19.	81.2%

95

GRADE 12--300 PART I CLUSTER II: PUNCTUATION and CAPITALIZATION (continued) NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 467

Punctuation (continued)

Objective	Achievement on Objective			Achievement Interpretation for Objective	Item Performance	
	Mean Performance	Score			Items Keyed to Objectives	Per Cent of Students Obtaining Item Correct
		Mean	Maximum			
9. Apostrophe-- contractions (caution: based on only one item.)	56.7%	0.57	1.0	MARGINAL: Actual achievement is somewhat below what is expected, but not to the point of being totally unacceptable. This is considered to be an area where some additional work is considered desirable.	45.	56.7%
10. Apostrophe-- possessive noun (caution: based on only one item.)	33.2%	0.33	1.0	UNSATISFACTORY: Actual achievement is well below what is expected. This is considered to be an area of weakness and remediation is deemed necessary.	29.	33.2%
11. End punctuation	84.3%	9.27	11.0	ACCEPTABLE: Actual achievement corresponds approximately with what is expected.	5.	99.6%
					9.	97.6%
					14.	98.5%
					21.	95.3%
					30.	70.0%
					35.	73.7%
					41.	89.3%
					49.	60.8%
					51.	66.8%
					57.	79.2%
					63.	96.4%

GRADE 12--300 PART I CLUSTER II: PUNCTUATION and CAPITALIZATION (continued) NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 467

Punctuation (continued)

Objective	Achievement on Objective			Achievement Interpretation for Objective	Item Performance	
	Mean Percentage	Score			Items Keyed to Objectives	Per Cent of Students Obtaining Item Correct
		Mean	Maximum			
12. Underlining Book titles	50.0%	1.00	2.0	UNSATISFACTORY: Actual achievement is well below what is expected. This is considered to be an area of weakness and remediation is deemed necessary.	39. 46.	49.5% 50.5%
13. Paragraphing--indentation after new ideas	68.8%	2.06	3.0	ACCEPTABLE: Actual achievement corresponds approximately with what is expected.	1. 15. 68.	78.8% 58.9% 68.7%
14. Paragraphing--indentation for change of speaker	47.6%	1.43	3.0	MARGINAL: Actual achievement is somewhat below what is expected, but not to the point of being totally unacceptable. This is considered to be an area where some additional work is con considered desirable.	31. 42. 52.	51.0% 45.0% 46.7%
OVERALL (42 items on punctuation)	66.9%	28.15	42.0			
OVERALL (63 items on punctuation and capitalization	74.6%	47.02	63.0			

97

GRADE 12--300 PART I CLUSTER III: BASIC STRUCTURES: GRAMMAR, USAGE AND SYNTAX NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 467

(III. *DIRECTIONS: In each group, one sentence is preferable to each of the others. Choose the best sentence in each group and circle the letter at the beginning of the sentence.*)

Objective	Achievement on Objective			Achievement Interpretation for Objective	Item Performance	
	Mean Percentage	Score			Items Keyed to Objectives	Per Cent of Students Obtaining Item Correct
		Mean	Maximum			
1. Number agreements--nouns and verbs	59.3%	1.19	2.0	MARGINAL: Actual achievement is somewhat below what is expected, but not to the point of being totally unacceptable. This is considered to be an area where some additional work is considered desirable.	3. 10.	48.6% 70.0%
2. Verb tense--tense change	83.6%	1.67	2.0	HIGHLY SATISFACTORY: Actual achievement is well beyond what is expected. This is considered to be an area of strength.	6. 7.	90.4% 76.7%
3. Placement of Modifiers and participles	75.3%	1.51	2.0	ACCEPTABLE: Actual achievement corresponds approximately with what is expected.	1. 14.	69.0% 81.6%
4. Parallel structures	67.0%	1.34	2.0	ACCEPTABLE: Actual achievement corresponds approximately with what is expected.	4. 8.	65.3% 68.7%

GRADE 12--300 PART I CLUSTER III: BASIC STRUCTURES: GRAMMAR, USAGE AND SYNTAX (continued) NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 467

Objective	Achievement on Objective			Achievement Interpretation for Objectives	Item Performance	
	Mean Percentage	Score			Items Keyed to Objectives	Per Cent of Students Obtaining Item Correct
		Mean	Maximum			
5. Confusibles (e.g., affect, effect)	70.5%	1.41	2.0	SATISFACTORY: Actual achievement is somewhat beyond what is expected.	11. 13.	68.1% 72.8%
6. Pronoun Reference	69.0%	1.38	2.0	HIGHLY SATISFACTORY: Actual achievement is well beyond what is expected. This is considered to be an area of strength.	2. 5.	50.5% 87.4%
7. Redundant Expressions	68.7%	1.37	2.0	SATISFACTORY: Actual achievement is somewhat beyond what is expected.	9. 12.	60.0% 77.3%
OVERALL (items 1 to 14)	70.5%	9.87	14.0			

66

GRADE 12--301 PART II CLUSTER: WRITTEN PRODUCT--ESSAY NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 279

(DIRECTIONS: *Choose ONE topic from EITHER List A or List B. In List A you are given only the title for an essay. In List B you are given the title plus a thesis statement which gives the main idea you are trying to present to the reader. WRITE AN ESSAY ON THE TOPIC YOU HAVE CHOSEN.*)

Holistic Scoring

HOLISTIC MARKING SCALE

5 = Highly Impressive	- well above average in thought, sentence structure and word choice, mostly free from error.
4 = Commendable	- in command of thought, sentence structure and word choice, relatively free from error.
3 = Questionable	- probably functional in terms of thought and sentence structure, but in need of instruction.
2 = Minimal	- in need of remediation--frustration level.
1 = Insufficient material	

Each essay was scored by two scorers. If there was a difference of more than one, the essay was scored by a third scorer. Each essay was then given a combined holistic score based on one of the following:

a) If 2 scorers were used

FIRST SCORE + SECOND SCORE = COMBINED SCORE (Maximum 10)

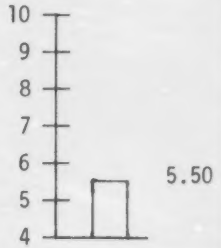
b) If 3 scorers were used

$$\frac{\text{FIRST SCORE + SECOND SCORE}}{2} + \text{THIRD SCORE} = \text{COMBINED SCORE (Maximum 10)}$$

Essays received scores ranging from a high of 10 (both scorers awarded a 5, Highly Impressive) to a low of 4 (both scorers awarded a 2, Minimal). A score of 2 means that the essay was not long enough to permit a judgement.

GRADE 12--301 PART II CLUSTER: WRITTEN PRODUCT--ESSAY (continued) NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 279

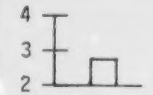
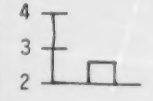
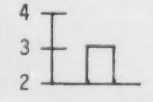
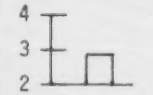
Holistic Scoring (continued)

Holistic Marking Scale	Combined Score	Per Cent of Students Obtaining Each Score	Mean Performance
Highly Impressive - well above average in thought, sentence structure and word choice, mostly free from error.	10	0.0%	
	9	1.1%	
Commendable - in command of thought, sentence structure and word choice, relatively free from error.	8	5.0%	
	7	14.0%	
Questionable - probably functional in terms of thought and sentence structure but in need of instruction.	6	27.2%	
	5	24.4%	
Minimal - in need of remediation--frustration level.	4	26.2%	
Insufficient Material.	2	2.2%	

(Interpretation of the holistic score results was not necessary since holistic scoring is based on interpretative ratings.)

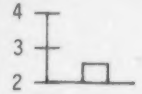
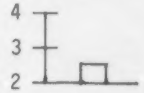
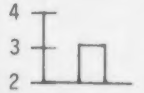
GRADE 12--301 PART II CLUSTER: WRITTEN PRODUCT--ESSAY (continued) NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 279

Descriptive Scoring

Descriptive Marking Scales		Per Cent of Students Obtaining Each Score	Mean Performance	Achievement Interpretation for Objective
Objective	Scale			
1. Interest of Content	4 = Originality and interest of ideas creates impact 3 = Ideas ordinary and functional 2 = Little or no evidence of interesting content 1 = Insufficient evidence	11.1% 53.0% 34.1% 1.8%	 2.77	SATISFACTORY: Actual achievement is somewhat beyond what is expected.
2. Style	4 = Develops effective style 3 = Ordinary and functional style 2 = Does not develop a style 1 = Insufficient evidence	6.5% 45.5% 46.2% 1.8%	 2.60	SATISFACTORY: Actual achievement is somewhat beyond what is expected.
3. Purpose	4 = Write with a purpose 3 = Usually writes with a purpose 2 = Does not write with a purpose 1 = Insufficient evidence	24.7% 53.8% 18.3% 3.5%	 3.07	SATISFACTORY: Actual achievement is somewhat beyond what is expected.
4. Organization of ideas	4 = Ideas appropriately organized by time, place and sequence 3 = Error in logical organization (one error) 2 = Error in logical organization (more than one error) 1 = Insufficient evidence	23.7% 37.6% 34.8% 4.0%	 2.88	ACCEPTABLE: Actual achieve- corresponds approximately with what is expected.

GRADE 12--301 PART II CLUSTER: WRITTEN PRODUCT--ESSAY (continued) NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 279

Descriptive Scoring (continued)

Descriptive Marking Scales		Per Cent of Students Obtaining Each Score	Mean Performance	Achievement Interpretation for Objective
Objective	Scale			
5. Variety of sentence structures	4 = Positive effect created by varying sentence structures 3 = Slight positive effect created by varying sentence structures 2 = No effect created by varying sentence structures 1 = Insufficient evidence	7.9% 33.7% 56.6% 1.8%	 2.50	SATISFACTORY: Actual achievement is somewhat beyond what is expected.
6. Word Choice and usage	4 = Word choice appropriate and correct 3 = Few errors which do not detract from impact 2 = Errors detract from readability and impression 1 = Insufficient evidence	9.3% 36.6% 33.0% 2.9%	 2.57	MARGINAL: Actual achievement is somewhat below what is expected, but not to the point of being totally unacceptable. This is considered to be an area where some additional work is considered desirable.
7. Punctuation and capitalization	4 = Capitalizes and punctuates correctly (0-2 errors) 3 = Errors in capitalization and punctuation (3-4 errors) 2 = Errors in capitalization and punctuation (more than 4 errors) 1 = Insufficient evidence	36.2%	 3.03	HIGHLY SATISFACTORY: Actual achievement is well above what is expected. This is considered to be an area of strength.

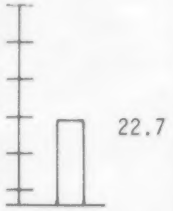
GRADE 12--301 PART II CLUSTER: WRITTEN PRODUCT--ESSAY (continued) NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 279

Descriptive Scoring (continued)

Descriptive Marking Scales		Per Cent of Students Obtaining Each Score	Mean Performance	Achievement Interpretation for Objective
Objective	Scale			
8. Spelling	4 = Spelling attracts little or no attention	50.9%	3.31	HIGHLY SATISFACTORY: Actual achievement is well beyond what is expected. This is considered to be an area of strength.
	3 = Few errors which do not detract from impact	25.1%		
	2 = Errors detract from readability and impression	21.1%		
	1 = Insufficient evidence	2.9%		

Descriptive Scoring (continued)

By adding up the scores for each essay, it was possible to assign each one an overall score. Overall scoring ranged from a maximum of 36 (the essay received a score of 4 on each descriptive scale) to a low of 18 (the essay received a score of 2 on each of the scales). A mark of 9 would simply mean that the essay was not long enough to permit a judgement, and therefore received a mark of 1 on each descriptive scale.

Overall Score on Descriptive Scales	Per Cent of Students Obtaining Each Overall Score	Mean Performance
30 - 32	4.0%	
27 - 29	12.2%	
24 - 26	22.2%	
21 - 23	28.4%	
18 - 20	23.3%	
15 - 17	7.5%	
8 (Insufficient evidence)	2.5%	

GRADE 12--301 PART I CLUSTER I: SPELLING NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 279

(I. DIRECTIONS: *One word in each group of words is misspelled. Find the misspelled word, underline the word, and spell it correctly in the blank following the group of words.*)

NOTE: Spelling items were not keyed to objectives.

Spelling Scale Categories	Per Cent of Students Obtaining Each Category: Mean for 23 Items[a]	Achievement on Spelling[a] (Based on Two Points per Item)			Achievement Interpretation for Spelling
		Mean Percentage	Score		
			Mean	Maximum	
Correct in identification and Spelling	46.6%	52.9%	24.3	46.0	ACCEPTABLE: Actual achievement corresponds approximately with what is expected.
Correct in identification but incorrect in spelling	12.6%				
Incorrect in identification	40.7%				

[a]Item 1 was not included as it was unacceptable as a test question, therefore there were 23 acceptable items.

Item	Spelling Scale Categories	Per Cent of Students Obtaining Each Category
1. sympathize[a]		

Item	Spelling Scale Categories	Per Cent of Students Obtaining Each Category
2. imaginable	Correct identification and spelling	51.3%
	Correct identification, incorrect spelling	6.5%
	Incorrect	41.9%

GRADE 12--301 PART I CLUSTER I: SPELLING (continued) NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 279

Item	Spelling Scale Categories	Per Cent of Students Obtaining Each Category
3. grievous	Correct identification and spelling	25.1%
	Correct identification, incorrect spelling	19.7%
	Incorrect	54.8%
5. privilege	Correct identification and spelling	40.9%
	Correct identification, incorrect spelling	46.6%
	Incorrect	12.5%
7. separate	Correct identification and spelling	51.6%
	Correct identification, incorrect spelling	1.1%
	Incorrect	46.6%
9. recommend	Correct identification and spelling	41.6%
	Correct identification, incorrect spelling	6.5%
	Incorrect	52.0%
11. tragedy	Correct identification and spelling	42.3%
	Correct identification, incorrect spelling	9.7%
	Incorrect	47.0%

Item	Spelling Scale Categories	Per Cent of Students Obtaining Each Category
4. prescribe	Correct identification and spelling	34.4%
	Correct identification, incorrect spelling	2.5%
	Incorrect	63.1%
6. niece	Correct identification and spelling	53.8%
	Correct identification, incorrect spelling	1.8%
	Incorrect	44.1%
8. truly	Correct identification and spelling	56.3%
	Correct identification, incorrect spelling	1.8%
	Incorrect	41.6%
10. admissible	Correct identification and spelling	12.5%
	Correct identification, incorrect spelling	20.4%
	Incorrect	66.3%
12. proceed	Correct identification and spelling	43.7%
	Correct identification, incorrect spelling	8.2%
	Incorrect	47.0%

GRADE 12--301 PART I CLUSTER I: SPELLING (continued) NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 279

Item	Spelling Scale Categories	Per Cent of Students Obtaining Each Category
13. parliament	Correct identification and spelling	56.6%
	Correct identification, incorrect spelling	16.5%
	Incorrect	26.2%
15. hindrance	Correct identification and spelling	6.5%
	Correct identification, incorrect spelling	10.0%
	Incorrect	82.8%
17. expense	Correct identification and spelling	66.7%
	Correct identification, incorrect spelling	5.0%
	Incorrect	27.6%
19. requirement	Correct identification and spelling	64.9%
	Correct identification, incorrect spelling	0.7%
	Incorrect	33.1%
21. temperament	Correct identification and spelling	16.5%
	Correct identification, incorrect spelling	12.2%
	Incorrect	69.5%

Item	Spelling Scale Categories	Per Cent of Students Obtaining Each Category
14. opening	Correct identification and spelling	81.7%
	Correct identification, incorrect spelling	0.7%
	Incorrect	17.2%
16. disappear	Correct identification and spelling	69.2%
	Correct identification, incorrect spelling	7.9%
	Incorrect	21.9%
18. attendance	Correct identification and spelling	63.8%
	Correct identification, incorrect spelling	1.8%
	Incorrect	33.0%
20. prejudice	Correct identification and spelling	54.5%
	Correct identification, incorrect spelling	18.6%
	Incorrect	25.1%
22. maintenance	Correct identification and spelling	40.1%
	Correct identification, incorrect spelling	38.4%
	Incorrect	20.8%

GRADE 12--301 PART I CLUSTER I: SPELLING (continued) NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 279

Item	Spelling Scale Categories	Per Cent of Students Obtaining Each Category
23. occasion	Correct identification and spelling	26.9%
	Correct identification, incorrect spelling	45.2%
	Incorrect	27.6%

Item	Spelling Scale Categories	Per Cent of Students Obtaining Each Category
24. imaginery	Correct identification and spelling	71.3%
	Correct identification, incorrect spelling	7.2%
	Incorrect	12.4%

GRADE 12--301 PART I CLUSTER II: PUNCTUATION and CAPITALIZATION NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 279

(II. DIRECTIONS: *The following paragraphs have been written without CAPITAL LETTERS, PUNCTUATION and INDENTATION. Correct the passage by marking in the Capital Letters and Punctuation. Place an X to indicate Indentation of a paragraph.*)

Capitalization

Objective	Achievement on Objective			Achievement Interpretation for Objective	Item Performance	
	Mean Percentage	Score			Items Keyed to Objectives	Per Cent of Students Obtaining Item Correct
		Mean	Maximum			
1. First word in a quotation	62.8%	2.51	4.0	MARGINAL: Actual achievement is somewhat below what is expected, but not to the point of being totally unacceptable. This is considered to be an area where some additional work is considered desirable.	28. 33. 44. 55.	45.6% 69.9% 74.9% 59.9%
2. First word in a sentence	84.2%	5.05	6.0	ACCEPTABLE: Actual achievement corresponds approximately with what is expected.	2. 6. 10. 16. 23. 58.	97.1% 93.9% 85.3% 90.0% 88.2% 50.5%
3. Proper Nouns	60.8%	1.22	2.0	UNSATISFACTORY: Actual achievement is well below what is expected. This is considered to be an area of weakness and remediation is deemed necessary.	3. 17.	60.9% 60.6%

GRADE 12--301 PART I CLUSTER II: PUNCTUATION and CAPITALIZATION (continued) NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 279

Capitalization (continued)

Objective	Achievement on Objective			Achievement Interpretation for Objective	Item Performance	
	Mean Percentage	Score			Items Keyed to Objectives	Per Cent of Students Obtaining Item Correct
		Mean	Maximum			
4. Titles	70.3%	1.41	2.0	ACCEPTABLE: Actual achievement corresponds approximately with what is expected.	40. 47.	67.4% 73.1%
5. Pronoun "I"	92.0%	6.44	7.0	ACCEPTABLE: Actual achievement corresponds approximately with what is expected.	24. 25. 37. 50. 56. 60. 61.	95.0% 93.9% 91.8% 94.3% 88.9% 90.0% 90.0%
OVERALL (21 items on capitalization)	79.2%	16.63	21.0			

111

GRADE 12--301 PART I CLUSTER II: PUNCTUATION and CAPITALIZATION (continued) NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 279

Punctuation

Objective	Achievement on Objective			Achievement Interpretation for Objective	Item Performance	
	Mean Percentage	Score			Items Keyed to Objectives	Per Cent of Students Obtaining Item Correct
		Mean	Maximum			
1. Comma--series	69.0%	1.38	2.0	SATISFACTORY: Actual achievement is somewhat beyond what is expected.	8. 13.	69.9% 68.1%
2. Comma--in dialogue	62.3%	1.87	3.0	ACCEPTABLE: Actual achievement corresponds approximately with what is expected.	26. 34. 62.	64.9% 59.5% 62.4%
3. Comma--parenthetical phrases	33.6%	1.78	5.0	UNSATISFACTORY: Actual achievement is well below what is expected. This is considered to be an area where some additional work is considered desirable.	11. 18. 20. 38. 48.	12.9% 15.8% 36.6% 48.0% 54.8%
4. Comma--non-restrictive clause	40.1%	0.40	1.0	ACCEPTABLE: Actual achievement corresponds approximately with what is expected.	4.	40.1%

GRADE 12--301 PART I CLUSTER II: PUNCTUATION and CAPITALIZATION (continued) NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 279

Punctuation (continued)

Objective	Achievement on Objective			Achievement Interpretation for Objective	Item Performance	
	Mean Percentage	Score			Items Keyed to Objectives	Per Cent of Students Obtaining Item Correct
		Mean	Maximum			
5. Comma--after Introductory Words	37.7%	0.75	2.0	MARGINAL: Actual achievement is somewhat below what is expected, but not to the point of being totally unacceptable. This is considered to be an area where some additional work is considered desirable.	55. 59.	39.1% 36.2%
6. Quotation Marks--direct quotation	54.2%	2.71	5.0	ACCEPTABLE: Actual achievement corresponds approximately with what is expected.	27. 32. 36. 43. 53.	68.8% 59.5% 48.4% 47.0% 47.3%
7. Colon--beginning of a list	14.0%	0.28	2.0	UNSATISFACTORY: Actual achievement is well below what is expected. This is considered to be an area of weakness and remediation is deemed necessary.	7. 12.	11.1% 16.8%
8. Semi-Colon--between coordinate clauses	69.5%	0.70	1.0	SATISFACTORY: Actual achievement is somewhat beyond what is expected.	19.	69.5%

GRADE 12--301 PART I CLUSTER II: PUNCTUATION and CAPITALIZATION (continued) NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 279

Punctuation (continued)

Objective	Achievement on Objective			Achievement Interpretation for Objective	Item Performance	
	Mean Percentage	Score			Items Keyed to Objectives	Per Cent of Students Obtaining Item Correct
		Mean	Maximum			
9. Apostrophe-- contractions	49.1%	0.49	1.0	MARGINAL: Actual achievement is somewhat below what is expected, but not to the point of being totally unacceptable. This is considered to be an area where some additional work is considered desirable.	45.	49.1%
10. Apostrophe-- possessive noun	18.6%	0.19	1.0	UNSATISFACTORY: Actual achievement is well below what is expected. This is considered to be an area of weakness and remediation is deemed necessary.	29.	18.6%
11. End punctuation	70.9%	7.80	11.0	SATISFACTORY: Actual achievement is somewhat beyond what is expected.	5. 9. 14. 21. 30. 35. 41. 49. 51. 57. 63.	93.9% 86.7% 88.5% 87.8% 51.3% 70.3% 71.3% 39.4% 45.5% 50.2% 94.6%

GRADE 12--301 PART I CLUSTER II: PUNCTUATION and CAPITALIZATION (continued) NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 279

Punctuation (continued)

Objective	Achievement on Objective			Achievement Interpretation for Objective	Item Performance	
	Mean Percentage	Score			Items Keyed to Objectives	Per Cent of Students Obtaining Item Correct
		Mean	Maximum			
12. Underlining book titles	28.5%	0.57	2.0	UNSATISFACTORY: Actual achievement is well below what is expected. This is considered to be an area of weakness and remediation is deemed necessary.	39. 46.	28.3% 29.0%
13. Paragraphing--indentation after new ideas	56.3%	1.69	3.0	ACCEPTABLE: Actual achievement corresponds approximately with what is expected.	1. 15. 22.	69.9% 48.4% 50.9%
14. Paragraphing--indentation for change of speaker	23.0%	0.69	3.0	UNSATISFACTORY: Actual achievement is well below what is expected. This is considered to be an area of weakness and remediation is deemed necessary.	31. 42. 52.	26.2% 21.9% 21.1%
OVERALL (42 items on punctuation)	50.7%	21.30	42.0			
OVERALL (63 items on punctuation and capitalization	60.2%	37.93	63.0			

GRADE 12--301 PART I CLUSTER III: BASIC STRUCTURES: GRAMMAR, USAGE AND SYNTAX NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 279

(III. *DIRECTIONS: In each group, one sentence is preferable to each of the others. Choose the best sentence in each group and circle the letter at the beginning of the sentence.*)

Objective	Achievement on Objective			Achievement Interpretation for Objective	Item Performance	
	Mean Percentage	Score			Items Keyed to Objectives	Per Cent of Students Obtaining Item Correct
		Mean	Maximum			
1. Number agreements--nouns and verbs	36.0%	0.72	2.0	ACCEPTABLE: Actual achievement corresponds approximately with what is expected.	3. 10.	24.0% 48.0%
2. Verb tense--verb change	68.5%	1.37	2.0	HIGHLY SATISFACTORY: Actual achievement is well beyond what is expected. This is considered to be an area of strength.	6. 7.	75.6% 60.9%
3. Placement of modifiers and participles	56.1%	1.11	2.0	SATISFACTORY: Actual achievement is somewhat beyond what is expected.	1. 14.	49.5% 61.6%
4. Parallel structures	49.1%	0.98	2.0	SATISFACTORY: Actual achievement is somewhat beyond what is expected.	4. 8.	43.4% 54.8%
5. Confusibles (e.g., affect, effect)	52.2%	1.04	2.0	HIGHLY SATISFACTORY: Actual achievement is well beyond what is expected. This is considered to be an area of strength.	11. 13.	50.5% 53.8%

GRADE 12--301 PART I CLUSTER III: BASIC STRUCTURES: GRAMMAR, USAGE and SYNTAX (continued) NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 279

Objective	Achievement on Objective			Achievement Interpretation for Objective	Item Performance	
	Mean Percentage	Score			Items Keyed to Objectives	Per Cent of Students Obtaining Item Correct
		Mean	Maximum			
6. Pronoun Reference	47.2%	0.94	2.0	HIGHLY SATISFACTORY: Actual achievement is well beyond what is expected. This is considered to be an area of strength.	2. 5.	35.5% 58.8%
7. Redundant Expressions	56.7%	1.13	2.0	HIGHLY SATISFACTORY: Actual achievement is well beyond what is expected. This is considered to be an area of strength.	9. 12.	49.5% 63.8%
OVERALL (items 1 to 14)	52.3%	7.29	14.0			

Summary of the Grade 12 Results

The tests at the grade 12 level had a greater emphasis on the written product than did the other grades although specific skills in spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and usage were also assessed. The written product was assessed holistically and according to eight descriptive scales. English 300 and English 301 student tests were randomly interspersed for scoring.

Written product: Holistic scoring. Grade 12 students chose their expository essay topic from five topic areas and four thesis statements. The essays were rated holistically by two scorers according to the Holistic Marking Scale:

Highly Impressive	- well above average in thought, sentence structure and word choice, mostly free from error.
Commendable	- in command of thought, sentence structure and word choice, relatively free from error.
Questionable	- probably functional in terms of thought and sentence structure, but in need of instruction.
Minimal	- in need of remediation--frustration level

Of the essays from the 467 English 300 students, 37.2% were considered "Highly Impressive" or "Commendable" by both scorers. An additional 24.8% were rated "Commendable" by one scorer and "Questionable" by the other. A total of 37.5% of essays were considered "Questionable" or "Minimal" by both scorers. Thus, 37.5% of English 300 students were considered in need of some instruction on the basis of their essay writing. Only 4.5% of essays (part of the 37.5%) were considered "Minimal", or in need of considerable assistance, by both scorers. The remaining 0.5% of essays were too limited to score.

Of the essays from the 279 English 301 students, 6.1% were considered "Highly Impressive" or "Commendable" by both scorers. An additional 14.0% were rated "Commendable" by one scorer and "Questionable" by the other. A total of 77.8% of essays were considered "Questionable" or "Minimal" by both scorers. Thus, 77.8% of English 301 students were considered in need of some instruction on the basis of their essay writing. Approximately 26.2% of essays (part of the 77.8%) were considered "Minimal", or in need of considerable assistance, by both scorers. The remaining 2.2% of essays were too limited to permit scoring.

Written product: Descriptive scoring. Grade 12 essays were rated by one scorer on eight descriptive scales. Performance on each descriptive scale was further evaluated by the Interpretation Panel according to the following scale:

Achievement Interpretation Scale

Highly Satisfactory: Actual achievement is well beyond what is expected. This is considered to be an area of strength.

Satisfactory: Actual achievement is somewhat beyond what is expected.

Acceptable: Actual achievement corresponds approximately with what is expected.

Marginal: Actual achievement is somewhat below what is expected, but not to the point of being totally unacceptable. This is considered to be an area where some additional work is considered desirable.

Unsatisfactory: Actual achievement is well below what is expected. This is considered to be an area of weakness and remediation is deemed necessary.

The Interpretation Panel rated performance of grade 12 English 300 students as "Acceptable" on one scale, and "Satisfactory" on four scales. Performance on four scales, "Interest of Content", "Style", "Punctuation and capitalization", and "Spelling", was rated as "Highly Satisfactory"; these aspects were considered areas of strength.

Performance of English 300 students was rated "Marginal" on one scale. Thus, no distinct weaknesses were detected.

Table 10

Grade 12--300 Written Product: Interpretations of Descriptive Ratings

Descriptive Scale	Interpretation
1. Interest of Content	Highly Satisfactory
2. Style	Satisfactory
3. Purpose	Satisfactory
4. Organization of Ideas	Satisfactory
5. Variety of Sentence Structure	Highly Satisfactory
6. Word Choice and Usage	Marginal
7. Punctuation and Capitalization	Highly Satisfactory
8. Spelling	Highly Satisfactory

The Interpretation Panel rated performance of grade 12 English 301 students as "Acceptable" on one scale, and "Satisfactory" on four scales. Performance on two scales, "Punctuation and capitalization" and "Spelling", was rated as "Highly Satisfactory"; these aspects were considered areas of strength.

Performance of English 301 students was rated "Marginal" on one scale. No distinct weaknesses were found.

Table 11

Grade 12--301 Written Product: Interpretations of Descriptive Ratings

Descriptive Scale	Interpretation
1. Interest of Content	Satisfactory
2. Style	Satisfactory
3. Purpose	Satisfactory
4. Organization of Ideas	Acceptable
5. Variety of Sentence Structure	Satisfactory
6. Word Choice and Usage	Marginal
7. Punctuation and Capitalization	Highly Satisfactory
8. Spelling	Highly Satisfactory

Specific skills. The clusters of objectives tested in the specific skills section were spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and basic structures. As in the grade 9 test, spelling items in the grade 12 test were not keyed to objectives. Spelling performance was rated by the Interpretation Panel on an overall basis. The 26 additional objectives were rated individually by the Panel. All interpretations were according to the Achievement Interpretation Scale.

Performance of the English 300 students was rated as "Acceptable" on 11 objectives. Performance on spelling and on two punctuation and two basic structures objectives was rated as "Satisfactory". Performance on two basic structures objectives, "Use of verb tense" and "Use of pronoun reference", was rated as "Highly Satisfactory"; these skills were considered areas of strength.

Performance on five objectives was rated as "Marginal" for English 300 students. Also, performance on four punctuation objectives was rated as "Unsatisfactory", these are considered areas of weakness. These four objectives are: "Use of comma for parenthetical phrases", "Use of colon at the beginning of a list", "Use of apostrophe for possessive nouns", and "Underlining of book titles". The interpretation of the objective, "Use of apostrophe for possessive nouns", must be viewed with caution as the judgement is based on responses to one item.

Table 12

Grade 12--300 Specific Skills: Number of Objectives Receiving Each Interpretation

Clusters of objectives	Achievement Interpretation Scale					Numbers of Objectives Tested
	Unsatis-factory	Marginal	Acceptable	Satis-factory	Highly Satis-factory	
Spelling (overall)				1		1
Capitalization		1	4			5
Punctuation	4	3	5	2		14
Basic Structures		1	2	2	2	7
Total Number of Objectives						27

Performance of the English 301 students was rated as "Acceptable" on spelling and on eight objectives. Performance on five punctuation and basic structures objectives was rated as "Satisfactory". Performance on four bssic structures objectives was rated as "Highly Satisfactory"; these skills were considered areas of strength. The objectives are: "Use of verb tense", "Use of confusibles (e.g., affect, effect)", "Use of pronoun reference", and "Identification of redundant expressions".

Performance on three objectives was rated as "Marginal" for English 301 students. Also, performance on six objectives in capitalization and punctuation was rated as "Unsatisfactory"; these skills were considered areas of weakness. The objectives are "Capitalization of proper nouns", "Use of comma for parenthetical phrases", "Use of colon at the beginning of a list", "Use of apostrophe for possessive nouns", "Underlining of book titles", and "Paragraph indentation for

change of speaker". The interpretation of the objective, "Use of apostrophe for possessive nouns", must be viewed with caution as the judgement is based on responses to one item.

Table 13

Grade 12--301 Specific Skills: Number of Objectives Receiving Each Interpretation

Clusters of Objectives	Achievement Interpretation Scale					Number of Objectives Tested
	Unsatis-factory	Marginal	Acceptable	Satis-factory	Highly Satis-factory	
Spelling (overall)			1			1
Capitalization	1	1	3			5
Punctuation	5	2	4	3		14
Basic Structures			1	2	4	7
					Total Number of Objectives	27

TEACHER OPINION RESULTS

In total, 1,554 teacher opinion forms were returned to the Department: 561, 524, 293, and 176 at grades 3, 6, 9, and 12 respectively. Teacher responses to the first four questions are reported in two ways: as percentage frequencies of endorsement of each of the nine scale points and as a mean (arithmetic average) for that scale. Responses to the fifth question are reported as percentage frequencies of "yes" and "no".

Teacher comments were analysed with respect to content. The content categories that resulted from this are: Test Instructions, Test Format, Test Content, Level of Difficulty of Content, Test Manual, and General Comments. The actual frequency of each category of comment is given.

The results on the five questions are first tabulated for all grades together. This is followed by the tabulated results and teacher comments for each grade level. The order of this section is:

All Grades,
Grade Three,
Grade Six,
Grade Nine,
Grade Twelve, and
Summary of Teacher Opinions.

WRITING ASSESSMENT PROGRAM---TEACHER EVALUATION

ALL GRADES

QUESTION	MEAN	NUMBER OF RESPONSES	STANDARD DEVIATION	PERCENTAGE OF SCALED RESPONSES 9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	NO RESPONSE
1. How clear were the testing instructions in the test manual? (out of 9 point scale)	7.578	1,564	1.647	Very Clear 36.0	27.2	16.9	8.0	4.9	2.9	1.2	1.0	Not at all clear 0.9	0.9
2. How close was the match between the test items and the skills you are teaching this year? (out of 9 point scale)	7.161	1,550	1.463	Very Close 18.9	25.0	28.0	13.4	8.6	2.0	1.6	0.4	Not at all close 0.3	1.8
3. How satisfied were you with the level of difficulty of the test? (out of 9 point scale)	7.012	1,553	1.603	Very Satisfied 17.4	25.1	26.2	13.2	9.8	3.0	2.2	0.9	Not at all Satisfied 0.6	1.6
4. OVERALL, how satisfied were you with the test in general? (out of 9 point scale)	6.915	1,549	1.666	Very Satisfied 14.1	26.5	27.9	12.9	8.9	3.3	2.2	1.0	Not at all Satisfied 1.5	1.9
5. If we were to test writing skills again some time in the future, would you be likely to request enough copies for your entire class? % = YES		1,554			YES 90.1		NO 8.4		OTHER 1.5				

123

WRITING ASSESSMENT PROGRAM---TEACHER EVALUATION

GRADE 3

QUESTION	MEAN	NUMBER OF RESPONSES	STANDARD DEVIATION	PERCENTAGE OF SCALED RESPONSES 9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	NO RESPONSE
1. How clear were the testing instructions in the test manual? (out of 9 point scale)	7.677	557	1.719	Very Clear 42.6	24.6	13.7	5.9	6.2	2.1	1.4	1.2	Not at all Clear 1.1	1.2
2. How close was the match between the test items and the skills you are teaching this year? (out of 9 point scale)	7.674	558	1.287	Very Close 30.5	29.8	25.0	6.7	5.0	0.9	0.7	0.2	Not at all Close 0.2	1.1
3. How satisfied were you with the level of difficulty of the test? (out of 9 point scale)	7.305	557	1.461	Very Satisfied 22.5	28.9	22.7	11.7	8.9	2.7	0.9	0.4	Not at all Satisfied 0.2	1.2
4. OVERALL, how satisfied were you with the test in general? (out of 9 point scale)	7.224	558	1.522	Very Satisfied 17.7	33.3	24.1	11.0	8.0	1.8	1.6	0.5	Not at all Satisfied 0.9	1.1
5. If we were to test writing skills again some time in the future, would you be likely to request enough copies for your entire class?						YES		NO		OTHER			
% = YES		561				91.5		8.0		0.5			

WRITING ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

ANALYSIS OF WRITTEN COMMENTS

GRADE 3

TEST INSTRUCTIONS

COMMENTS	FREQUENCY
1. There should be more definite instructions on time limits for each section of the test. It was not clear as to whether the test had to be taken in at the end of the designated time.	40
2. The manual did not indicate whether questions could be answered, or how much assistance could be provided.	36
3. The instructions for Part II (Punctuation and Capitalization) were not clear. It was not stated how corrections were to be made. An example should be provided.	29
4. The directions that were provided should be stated more clearly.	11
5. In sentence writing, teachers should have been given more explicit directions on what to do when students use derivatives of the verb.	8

TEST FORMAT

COMMENTS	FREQUENCY
1. The test was well done, well prepared and covered most basic skills. The format was good, well organized, and the test was comprehensive.	15

TEST CONTENT

COMMENTS	FREQUENCY
1. More material should be covered; not all the skills taught were tested	14

COMMENTS	FREQUENCY
2. The following skills should have been tested:	
--more grammar and usage	10
--friendly letter	8
--homonyms, antonyms and synonyms	7
--parts of speech and verb tense	5
--quotations	4
--adjectives, adverbs and verbs	2
--contractions and plurals	1
--paragraphing	1
--syllabication	1
--sequencing of events	1
--word definitions	1
--possessives	1
3. The way used to stimulate writing was inappropriate. Time should have been allowed for discussion beforehand.	6
4. Rather than having one long composition, a shorter piece of writing would be preferred.	5
5. In Part V (Sentence Identification), a period should have been included at the end of the line. Many students said that none of the items were sentences because none of them ended in periods.	4
6. The essay topic was stimulating for a primary story.	7

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY OF CONTENT

COMMENTS	FREQUENCY
1. The test should have been more challenging. It was more a review of the previous years work.	30

TEST MANUAL

COMMENTS	FREQUENCY
1. The marking explanations were ambiguous. Instructions should be more detailed, as scales were hard to interpret.	27

TEST MANUAL

COMMENTS	FREQUENCY
2. The story section was difficult to mark accurately. Marking was too subjective.	10
3. The explanations for marking the story section were hard to understand.	8

GENERAL COMMENTS

COMMENTS	FREQUENCY
1. The test was too long for the amount of time provided. More time was needed for the whole test.	28
2. The tests and manuals should be given to the teacher at an earler time.	6

WRITING ASSESSMENT PROGRAM---TEACHER EVALUATION

GRADE 6

QUESTION	MEAN	NUMBER OF RESPONSES	STANDARD DEVIATION	PERCENTAGE OF SCALED RESPONSES 9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	NO RESPONSE
1. How clear were the testing instructions in the test manual? (out of 9 point scale)	7.470	528	1.546	Very Clear 31.4	26.3	19.0	11.5	4.9	4.3	1.1	0.8	Not at all Clear 0.0	0.8
2. How close was the match between the test items and the skills you are teaching this year? (out of 9 point scale)	7.342	524	1.323	Very Close 12.8	25.0	32.1	16.0	8.8	2.4	1.1	0.2	Not at all Close 0.0	1.5
3. How satisfied were you with the level of difficulty of the test? (out of 9 point scale)	7.068	526	1.568	Very Satisfied 17.7	26.1	27.1	13.2	8.1	3.4	2.3	0.6	Not at all Satisfied 0.6	1.1
4. OVERALL, how satisfied were you with the test in general? (out of 9 point scale)	6.890	525	1.672	Very Satisfied 13.7	25.6	30.1	11.8	9.2	3.6	2.1	1.1	Not at all Satisfied 1.5	1.3
5. If we were to test writing skills again some time in the future, would you be likely to request enough copies for your entire class? 9 = YES		524		YES 92.1	NO 6.4	OTHER 1.5							

WRITING ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

ANALYSIS OF WRITTEN COMMENTS

GRADE 6

TEST INSTRUCTIONS

COMMENTS	FREQUENCY
1. The directions in Part IV (Sentence Writing) were unclear. (especially sections E,F,G,H). More explicit directions are needed.	48
2. The directions were vague, unclear and the wording was confusing. Much of the terminology (subject, object, negative statement, descriptive) is not used in instruction, so students were confused about what they were supposed to do.	42
3. An example should be provided with each section for clarity.	12
4. Better guidelines should be provided for length of the story.	6

TEST FORMAT

COMMENTS	FREQUENCY
1. The test was too long for the amount of time provided. Eighty minutes is too long a period of time for grade 6 students to write. The test should be administered in more than one session.	71
2. More time should be given for Part II (Story Writing). It is impossible for students to write a rough draft, proofread and write a final copy in 35 minutes.	46

TEST CONTENT

COMMENTS	FREQUENCY
1. Certain skills were not covered in the test that should have been:	

COMMENTS	FREQUENCY
--letters	5
--basic grammar	5
--more emphasis on creative writing	3
--parts of speech	2
--word use	1
--semantics	1
2. Excellent test. The test was a good exercise. The test was well organized, format was good. The test was indicative of abilities and a worthwhile effort.	13

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY OF TEST

COMMENTS	FREQUENCY
1. Some parts of the sentence writing were far too difficult for the grade 6 level. (subordinate clauses, negative statements, parallel structure)	21
2. The section on spelling was too difficult. The usual words were not tested. The focus was mainly on tricky words (i.e. possessives)	11

TEST MANUAL

COMMENTS	FREQUENCY
1. The instructions for marking were unclear. The key is inconsistent and hard to interpret.	15
2. The method of evaluating the story was difficult. It was ambiguous and too subjective.	11
3. The marking for part IV was unfair. The skill that was being tested was not specified. Directions are not clear enough for the marking that is expected.	5

GENERAL COMMENTS

COMMENTS	FREQUENCY
1. The sample was not indicative of class performance. Below average students were selected.	14

WRITING ASSESSMENT PROGRAM---TEACHER EVALUATION

GRADE 9

QUESTION	MEAN	NUMBER OF RESPONSES	STANDARD DEVIATION	PERCENTAGE OF SCALED RESPONSES 9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	NO RESPONSE
1. How clear were the testing instructions in the test manual? (out of 9 point scale)	7.414	302	1.809	Very Clear 30.6	30.6	19.1	6.6	3.9	3.6	1.3	1.6	Not at all Clear 2.0	0.7
2. How close was the match between the test items and the skills you are teaching this year? (out of 9 point scale)	6.966	292	1.426	Very Close 13.8	21.4	29.6	18.1	8.6	2.0	2.0	0.7	Not at all Close 0.0	3.9
3. How satisfied were you with the level of difficulty of the test? (out of 9 point scale)	6.666	296	1.659	Very Satisfied 11.2	21.1	27.6	16.4	12.5	2.3	4.3	1.3	Not at all Satisfied 0.7	2.6
4. OVERALL, how satisfied were you with the test in general? (out of 9 point scale)	6.647	295	1.700	Very Satisfied 9.9	21.4	29.6	18.1	7.9	4.3	2.6	1.6	Not at all Satisfied 1.6	3.0
5. If we were to test writing skills again some time in the future, would you be likely to request enough copies for your entire class? % = YES		293		YES 86.5	NO 9.9	OTHER 3.6							

WRITING ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

ANALYSIS OF WRITTEN COMMENTS

GRADE 9

TEST INSTRUCTIONS

COMMENTS	FREQUENCY
1. The instructions on Part II (Punctuation and Capitalization) were confusing. Should be more specific on where to correct.	13
2. Instructions on Part III (Sentence Writing) were unclear. Specifically, Part III B lacked clarity.	12
3. In general, the instructions were unclear or misleading. (Students had many questions.)	6

TEST FORMAT

COMMENTS	FREQUENCY
1. Students did not require two hours to write the test. The majority finished early.	14
2. Not enough room was provided for writing the letter.	8

TEST CONTENT

COMMENTS	FREQUENCY
1. The business letter hasn't been taught yet. (It is not taught at all this year.)	39
2. A wider range of skills should have been tested. There should have been sections on:	
--vocabulary	4
--usage	4
--descriptive, narrative and expository writing	3
--phrases and clauses	2

COMMENTS	FREQUENCY
--possessives	1
--plurals	1
--creative writing	1
--active and passive voice	1
--homonyms	1
3. More grammar items should have been included on the test.	12
4. The spelling section was challenging. The words were too difficult, too tricky. Spelling should not be tested in this way. It is not a realistic assessment of Language Arts Skills.	10
5. The paragraph topics were poor. They had little appeal for girls. There should have been more freedom of choice.	3
6. The letter lacked a postal code--should be stressed.	2
7. Too much emphasis was placed on punctuation and capitalization, as there is little emphasis in instruction.	1
8. Overall, this was an excellent project. The test was fair. It was a good test of language knowledge and basic skills. The test helps to point out deficiencies in the program.	9

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY OF TEST

COMMENTS	FREQUENCY
1. The level of difficulty was too easy. The test was easier than expected. At the grade 7 or 8 level.	20
2. The test was at the appropriate level of difficulty for grade 9 ability.	7

TEST MANUAL

COMMENTS	FREQUENCY
1. The instructions for marking were unclear, especially for the sections on the letter and the paragraph.	10
2. Too many marks were given for the business letter.	4

WRITING ASSESSMENT PROGRAM---TEACHER EVALUATION

GRADE 12

QUESTION	MEAN	NUMBER OF RESPONSES	STANDARD DEVIATION	PERCENTAGE OF SCALED RESPONSES 9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	NO RESPONSE
1. How clear were the testing instructions in the test manual? (out of 9 point scale)	7.864	176	1.341	Very Clear 37.6	32.0	17.4	7.3	2.8	0.0	0.6	0.0	Not at all Clear 1.1	1.1
2. How close was the match between the test items and the skills you are teaching this year? (out of 9 point scale)	6.223	175	1.798	Very Close 9.0	15.7	22.5	19.1	19.1	3.9	5.6	1.7	Not at all Close 1.7	1.7
3. How satisfied were you with the level of difficulty of the test? (out of 9 point scale)	6.486	173	1.810	Very Satisfied 10.7	16.9	32.0	12.4	13.5	4.5	2.8	2.8	Not at all Satisfied 1.7	2.8
4. OVERALL, how satisfied were you with the test in general? (out of 9 point scale)	6.435	170	1.849	Very Satisfied 10.7	15.7	30.3	13.5	12.4	5.6	3.4	1.1	Not at all Satisfied 2.8	4.5
5. If we were to test writing skills again some time in the future, would you be likely to request enough copies for your entire class? % = YES		176		YES 85.4		NO 13.5		OTHER 1.1					

WRITING ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

ANALYSIS OF WRITTEN COMMENTS

GRADE 12

TEST INSTRUCTIONS

COMMENTS	FREQUENCY
1. The length of the essay should be specified.	9
2. The amount of time provided for the test should be more specific.	4

TEST FORMAT

COMMENTS	FREQUENCY
1. There were problems in doing the section on punctuation. Not enough room was provided. It was difficult to mark.	7

TEST CONTENT

COMMENTS	FREQUENCY
1. Many of the skills (spelling, grammar, punctuation and capitalization, usage) are not specifically taught.	19
2. Other types of writing skills should have been tested.	
--vocabulary	4
--sight prose	2
--sentence structure	2
--literature	2
--reading	2
--business skills	1
--poems	1

COMMENTS	FREQUENCY
3. Too much emphasis was placed on the section on punctuation and capitalization.	7
4. Method of testing spelling was inadequate (was tricky).	7
5. The essay topics did not have enough variety--they were too general, simplistic or dull.	5

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY OF TEST

COMMENTS	FREQUENCY
1. There is a difference between the abilities of 300 and 301 students. This test is too difficult for 301's.	9

TEST MANUAL

COMMENTS	FREQUENCY
1. Errors in the answer key.	16
2. The instructions for marking are confusing or unclear. Should be more specific. Key for punctuation section needs improvement.	12

GENERAL

COMMENTS	FREQUENCY
1. The method of random sampling was inadequate--sample too small, lower ability students picked.	4
2. Test should be administered yearly.	3

Summary of Teacher Opinion. In general, the response of teachers to the tests was favorable. On the nine-point scales a middle position would be approximately five. Actual mean (average) response ranged from 6.2 to 7.9. The highest ratings were awarded the clarity of test instructions. Mean response tended to be slightly less positive for the higher grades than it did for the lower ones for the questions on test content, test difficulty, and overall test quality. This was reflected in the fifth question; less teachers were likely to request enough copies to test their entire class at grades 9 and 12 than at grades 3 and 6.

Table 14

Teacher Response to the Tests

(For items 1 to 4, scales are from 9 to 1 where 9 is the most positive.)

Question	Mean Response			
	Gr. 3	Gr. 6	Gr. 9	Gr. 12
1. How clear were the testing instructions in the test manual? (9: Very...to 1: not at all)	7.7	7.5	7.4	7.9
2. How close was the match between test items and the skills you are teaching this year? (9: Very...to 1: not at all)	7.7	7.0	7.0	6.2
3. How satisfied were you with the level of difficulty of the test? (9: Very...to 1: not at all)	7.3	7.1	6.7	6.5
4. OVERALL, how satisfied were you with the test in general? (9: Very...to 1: not at all)	7.2	6.9	6.6	6.4
5. If we were to test writing skills again in the future, would you be likely to request enough copies for your entire class? (% of "yes" responses)	92%	92%	87%	85%

The comments of teachers were analysed for common aspects. In general they tended to fit the categories: Test Instructions, Test Format, Test Content, Level of Difficulty of Content, and Test Manual. The comments, though, ranged widely in scope. A few fairly typical examples of teacher comments are given below. In most cases each comment had appeared in some manner on at least ten response forms.

Test Instructions:

Grade	
3	There should be more definite time limits on sections of the test.
6	The directions for Sentence Writing should be more explicit.
9	The instructions on punctuation and capitalization should be more specific.
12	The length of the essay should be specified.

Test Format:

Grade	
3	The format was good, well organized, and the test was comprehensive.
6	The test was too long to write in one session for grade 6 students.
9	Students did not require two hours to write the test.
12	The section on capitalization and punctuation did not have enough room--difficult to mark.

Test Content:

Grade	
3	Additional skills could have been tested.
6	Excellent test. The test was a good exercise.
9	The business letter has not been taught yet.
12	Many of the specific skills are not specifically taught.

Level of Difficulty of Content:

Grade	
3	The test should have been more challenging.
6	Some of the sentence writing was far too difficult.
9	The level of difficulty was too easy.
12	This test was too difficult for English 301 students.

Test Manual:

Grade	
3	Marking instructions should be more detailed.
6	The marking key was difficult to interpret.
9	Marking instructions were unclear, especially for the written products.
12	Error in the marking key.

CHAPTER 5

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE WRITING ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

Manitoba students in grades 3, 6, 9, and 12 were assessed on writing ability by the Department of Education as part of the ongoing provincial program of student assessment in major subject areas. In May of 1979, a total of 4,989 student papers (approximately 9 percent of enrollment at these grades) was submitted to the Department for scoring as the provincial sample. Grades 3, 6, 9, and 12 are the final grades of the primary, elementary, junior and senior programs, and were selected for assessment because they could provide information on writing skills at important stages of student growth and development.

The tests were designed to assess students on global writing performance and on their performance of a number of specific writing tasks. Students in the four grades were required to write in a sustained manner: a story in grades 3 and 6; a paragraph in grade 9, and an expository essay in grade 12. (An expository essay has as its purpose the statement and explanation of an explicit idea, argument, or philosophy, and thus is distinct from story writing.) Students were also required to answer a number of specific questions on spelling, punctuation, grammar, and word usage.

The student papers that formed the provincial sample were marked by English Language Arts teachers drawn from locations throughout Manitoba. The actual written products--stories, paragraphs, and essays--were scored A. for global writing ability, and B. for performance on a number of key aspects of writing. The student papers were further scored C. for answers to the specific questions.

A. On the basis of the global assessment of the written products, the major findings regarding writing ability are:

- Over 20 percent of the student writing at all four grades was of a high level of proficiency: the writing was relatively free from error.
- An additional 50 percent of students in the four grades wrote at a level functional for their particular grade, but a portion of these exhibited some weaknesses in expression.
- The remaining percentage of students exhibited greater weaknesses in writing, but less than 13 percent of students at all four grades wrote at a level that was clearly not functional for their grade. These students exhibited a considerable number of difficulties and weaknesses in writing.

Although the majority of students, over 70 percent, wrote at a level at least appropriate to their grade, within each grade level tested a variety of weaknesses occurred in the writing. If students exhibiting considerable difficulty in writing are combined with those whose writing was functional yet containing weaknesses, the percentages of students with weaknesses in their writing were:

50 percent at grade 3,
56 percent at grade 6,
34 percent at grade 9, and
53 percent at grade 12.

B. The written products were scored for performance on key aspects of writing: topic

development (including unity, coherence, and organization), word usage, and mechanics. Interpretation Panels of educators and school trustees judged the performance at each grade level of students on the whole. The Panels for the four grades initially specified their expectations of student performance on the key aspects and then compared these to actual performance of the sample of students. Based on overall performance of the sample of students, judgements were made on the scale: Highly Satisfactory, Satisfactory, Acceptable, Marginal, and Unsatisfactory.

The major findings of the Interpretation Panels, regarding overall student performance on key aspects of writing, are:

- At the grade 3 level, performance on all nine aspects assessed was rated as Acceptable or Satisfactory
- At the grade 6 level, performance on nine of the ten aspects assessed was rated as Acceptable or Satisfactory. Performance on the tenth aspect, organization, was rated as Highly Satisfactory.
- At the grade 9 level, performance on six of the nine aspects assessed on the paragraph was rated as Acceptable or Satisfactory. Performance on the three remaining aspects of topic focus, word usage, and spelling was rated Highly Satisfactory.
- At the grade 9 level, performance on two of the three aspects assessed on the business letter was rated as Acceptable. Performance on the third aspect, letter format, was rated Unsatisfactory.
- At the grade 12 level, performance on seven of the eight aspects assessed was rated as Acceptable or higher. Performance on two of the seven, punctuation and spelling, was rated as Highly Satisfactory for both English 300 and 301 students. Performance on the eighth aspect, word usage, was rated as Marginal for both 300 and 301 students.

C. At each of the four grades, overall student performance on the specific skills assessed by short-answer questions was judged by the Interpretation Panels. The major findings of the Interpretation Panels, regarding overall student performance on specific skills, are:

- At the grade 3 level, performance on 18 of the 20 skills assessed was rated as Acceptable or higher.
- At the grade 6 level, performance on 22 of the 34 skills assessed was rated as Acceptable or higher.
- At the grade 9 level, performance on eight of the 13 skills, and on spelling on the whole, was rated as Acceptable or higher.
- At the grade 12 level, performance on 17 of the 26 skills, and on spelling on the whole, was rated as Acceptable or higher for both English 300 and 301 students.
- At grades 6, 9, and 12, approximately half of the skills in punctuation were rated as Marginal or Unsatisfactory in performance.

In general, as many as 50 percent of students were considered to have some weaknesses in actual writing, but these weaknesses were not necessarily on aspects common to the majority of students at the particular grade level. Also, weaknesses that appeared on questions related to specific skills did not typically appear in actual written products.

Recommendations

While the findings of this Writing Assessment indicate that student performance on average is acceptable, there is evidence that as many as 50 percent of students are in need of an increased and more consistent emphasis on writing. Since the ability to communicate in writing is so fundamental to future success, it is strongly suggested that the Minister through his Department support a number of recommendations.

Some of the more important of these are:

- That the General Report be considered in detail for implications for development and implementation of curriculum.
- That curriculum emphasize a wide range of writing abilities, and provide for student practice in a variety of writing types.
- That consideration be given to the demands of writing in additional curriculum areas.
- That the pattern of workshops already initiated as a result of the Writing Assessment Program be continued to assist teachers in the identification of writing objectives, and the development of skills in the teaching and assessment of written expression.
- That school divisions and schools establish workshops to consider the contents of the Writing Assessment Report in depth and to plan follow-up action appropriate to local needs.
- That more emphasis be placed on the composing of written expression as a more effective method of instruction than the teaching of isolated skills.
- That students be required to do more pointed writing exercises aimed at specific purposes and audiences.
- That special attention be given to the diagnosis and instruction of students who are not functional writers.

CHAPTER 6
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Writing Assessment Program was intended to provide feedback for program development and to produce Provincial data on which to base future evaluation. In addition, the program was to assist in the professional development of teachers and thereby enhance education for students in the Province. Some effects of the Program have already been noticed in schools, specifically

a) the focus of attention on the writing performance of students in schools,

b) the definition and review of educational objectives in writing,

c) the introduction into schools of a method to assist teachers to assess accurately the quality of student writing (holistic and descriptive scoring),

d) the presentation of a method by which teachers and others can make explicit their expectations of students in an area of study, and interpret student performance relative to the expectations.

Substantial teacher involvement occurred throughout the Program. This was done by teacher participation on the Technical Advisory Committee and by teacher assistance in setting objectives, scoring tests, and interpreting results. Meetings with teachers have been planned to provide follow-up to the release of results.

Close to 90 percent of all teachers who responded to the tests indicated that they would request enough test copies to test their entire class if writing were assessed in the future. This indicates that the Writing Assessment tests were considered useful by classroom teachers.

The findings of the Program regarding the assessment of writing illustrate many of the conclusions of other similar assessments. Some that should be noted are:

a) Accurate assessment of student writing must be based on a wide range of skills and tasks, for, over the total range of objectives, a considerable variation exists in any student's performance.

b) A number of tasks (or a longer sustained task) is necessary for assessing each objective. Student performance on an objective is highly dependent on the tasks selected to assess the objective. This is particularly evidenced in the variation of percentage correct for different items pertaining to the same objective.

c) Even when scorers are trained, differences exist between the scores awarded the same paper by different scorers.

d) Holistic scoring can be used by teachers to make quick, fairly reliable judgements of the quality of student writing. This is particularly useful for the scoring of papers where there is a minimum of instructional feedback. Additional scoring can be done to provide the student with feedback on various aspects of the writing. If the additional aspects are carefully selected and limited in number, scoring can still be rapid and reliable.

e) Expectations for student performance can be made by professionals familiar with the performance of students. These expectations tend to vary somewhat from one educator to the next so judgements of actual performance ought to be made by a team of persons.

Conclusions

It is difficult to summarize the conclusions regarding the writing ability of Manitoba

students because of the number and range of skills assessed and the lack of comparative data. A number of conclusions do appear warranted on the basis of student performance; these are provided in point form in the HIGHLIGHTS of the Report. It is necessary to elaborate briefly on a few points.

At grades 3 and 6, students were required to write a story whereas at grade 9 they were required to write a paragraph, which is a different kind of writing. At grade 12, English 300 and English 301 students wrote identical tests in which a greater emphasis was placed on the written product, an expository essay, than at the other grades.

On the basis of global (holistic) assessment of these written products it is apparent that:

a) At all grade levels a substantial percentage of students were judged capable of a high level of proficiency in writing. The percentages of students clearly rated in this category were 30, 22, 37, and 26 in grades 3, 6, 9, and 12 respectively.

b) The proportion of students considered to write at a level that was at least functional for their particular grade (including those considered to be highly proficient and those exhibiting some weaknesses) exceeded 83, 77, 85, and 70 percent in grades 3, 6, 9, and 12 respectively. At the grade 12 level, over 84 percent of the English 300 students appeared at least functional whereas approximately 47 percent of 301 students were rated at least functional.

c) In grades 3 and 6 respectively 50 and 56 percent of students were considered to have some weaknesses in story writing. In grade 9 approximately 34 percent of students were considered to have some weaknesses in paragraph writing, and in grade 12 approximately 53 percent were considered to have some weaknesses in expository essay writing. On the basis of the grade 12 essay 38 percent of the English 300 students appeared to have some weaknesses in writing whereas 78 percent of the 301 students appeared in this classification.

d) The apparent higher performance of students at the grade 9 level reflects the less demanding nature of the task involved, a paragraph, rather than overall higher ability.

On the basis of the scoring of the written products on key aspects of writing, the Interpretation Panels' adjudications suggested that:

e) Few key aspects of the writing were systematically weak on average for students at each particular grade level. Average performance of students at the grade 12 level on word choice and usage was considered to be somewhat below grade level expectations.

f) Grade 9 students wrote a business letter as well as a paragraph. On average, students were rated as being weak in setting the format of the letter.

On the basis of the scoring of student performance on specific skills of writing, the Interpretation Panels' adjudications suggested that:

g) Some strengths and some weaknesses occurred on average in specific writing skills at all grade levels. The only grade level pattern that emerged was that fewer skills were indicated as weak at the grade 3 level than at the other levels. All grades appeared to have some weaknesses in the area of punctuation. Performance on some basic structure skills, which include grammatical skills, was considered as above expectation for the particular grade level for all four grades.

h) Although a number of weaknesses were disclosed in specific skills in all four grades these weaknesses were not always apparent in the actual written products. Based on the written products, performances on basic structure, punctuation and capitalization, and spelling were typically rated as "Acceptable" at that grade level, or higher, for all grades.

Recommendations

While the findings of this Writing Assessment indicate that student performance on average is acceptable, there is evidence that as many as 50 percent of students are in need of an increased and more consistent emphasis on writing. Since the ability to communicate in writing is so fundamental to future success, it is strongly suggested that the Minister through his Department support a number of recommendations.

1. That the General Report be considered in detail in terms of implications for their work by all educators and educational groups involved in the teaching and assessment of student writing.

To educators working on program development:

2. That though the present assessment was restricted of necessity to a limited range of writing tasks, no program should be limited to the types of writing and writing skills actually assessed.
3. That curriculum should emphasize a wide range of writing abilities and provide for student practice in a variety of writing types.
4. That consideration be given to the demands of writing in additional curriculum areas.
5. That curriculum should delineate a variety of writing tasks in terms of purpose, audience, and forms, and designate the appropriate grade levels for introduction of these tasks. Some examples are: expository, descriptive, and narrative types of writing; letters and memoranda.
6. That the curriculum guides should reflect the latest research findings on the teaching and learning of writing, and make clear the complexity of the process.

To those involved in the preservice and inservice training of teachers and the support and delivery of curriculum (Department personnel as well as University and College faculties and professional educational organization):

7. That the pattern of workshops already initiated as a result of the Writing Assessment Program be continued to assist teachers in the identification of writing objectives, and in the development of skills in the teaching and assessment of written expression.
8. That school divisions and schools establish workshops to consider the contents of the Writing Assessment Report in depth and to plan follow-up action appropriate to local needs.

To educators at the school level:

9. That more emphasis be placed on the composing of written expression as a more effective method of instruction than the teaching of isolated skills.

10. That students should be required to do more pointed writing exercises aimed at specific purposes and audiences.

11. That more emphasis be placed at the high school level on developing an appropriate and mature vocabulary and its usage.

12. That special attention should be given to the diagnosis and instruction of students who are not functional writers.

Some further possibilities are recommended for consideration by the Joint Committee on Evaluation, Technical Advisory Committees, and the Measurement and Evaluation Branch for subsequent testing programs:

13. That the planned three year cycle of testing in writing be utilized to develop an accurate index of writing proficiency for Manitoba. The present study provides only baseline data for future comparisons. Some content elements of this assessment should be retained for future assessments to permit valid comparisons.

14. That further analytical study of the present student papers be conducted to ascertain more specific strengths and weaknesses in student written products. Such analysis is time consuming and expensive but could involve a subsample of the 10 percent Provincial sample.

15. That a wider view of writing skills should be considered for inclusion in future assessments. The present program made no pretense at covering the wide range of writing abilities necessary for students. A future writing assessment may begin by specifying the variety of writing purposes and analysing these for possible assessment.

16. That future assessment programs include more substantial questionnaires to obtain additional information from both teachers and students. Curriculum committees and other bodies, as well as teachers, should be requested to indicate the information that would be most useful to them in a-dition to student performance data.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

COMMITTEES AND GROUPS ASSOCIATED WITH THE ASSESSMENT

Measurement and Evaluation Branch

Joint Committee on Evaluation

Writing Assessment Technical Advisory Committee

Writing Assessment Consultant

COMMITTEES AND GROUPS ASSOCIATED WITH THE ASSESSMENT

Measurement and Evaluation Branch

John Shaw
Henry Schulz

Joint Committee on Evaluation: 1978-79 Term

K. Breckman, Manitoba Teachers' Society
V. Wadelius, Manitoba Teachers' Society
R. White, Manitoba Association of School Trustees
D. Cowling, Manitoba Association of School Trustees
N. Isler (Chairperson), Manitoba Association of School Superintendents
J. Rogan, Faculty of Education, University of Manitoba
D. Hayes, Faculty of Education, Brandon University
S. Bullock, Program Development Directorate, Manitoba Department of Education
J. Shaw/H. Schulz, Measurement and Evaluation Branch, Manitoba Department of Education

Consultants

M. Yakimishyn, Research Branch, Manitoba Department of Education
J. Thompson, Research Branch, Manitoba Department of Education
M. McDonald, Bureau de l'Education Français, Manitoba Department of Education

Writing Assessment Technical Advisory Committee

J. Easton, Sargent Park School, Winnipeg, Manitoba
J. Moss, Selkirk Junior High School, Selkirk, Manitoba
E. Klassen, Meadows School, Brandon, Manitoba
M. Dushenko, Maple Leaf School, Morden, Manitoba
O. Greening, Kelsey School Division #45, The Pas, Manitoba
D. Winter, Garden Valley Collegiate, Winkler, Manitoba
A. Young, Westwood Collegiate, Winnipeg, Manitoba
G. Hammond, Bernie Wolfe Community School, Winnipeg, Manitoba

Consultants

J. Shaw/H. Schulz, Measurement and Evaluation Branch, Manitoba Department of Education
J. Thompson, Research Branch, Manitoba Department of Education
Dr. D. MacNaughton, MacNaughton Projects Ltd., Calgary, Alberta
D. Bewell, Curriculum Development Branch, Manitoba Department of Education
D. Brummitt, Curriculum Services Branch, Manitoba Department of Education
W. Layne, Curriculum Services Branch, Manitoba Department of Education
D. Partridge, External Administrative Support Unit, Manitoba Department of Education

Program Consultant

Dr. D. MacNaughton, MacNaughton Projects Ltd., Calgary, Alberta

APPENDIX B

PRIORIZATION OF OBJECTIVES

Priorization Scale
Revised Objectives Lists in Order of Priority
Regional Meetings

PRIORIZATION SCALE

Use the following scale to priorize
the list of Writing Objectives.

4 = Very Important. Essential for assessment

3 = Above Average Importance. Assess if at all possible.

2 = Below Average Importance. Consider omitting if student assessment time is at a premium.

1 = Unimportant. Inappropriate, irrelevant.

Each grade level assumes inclusion of the
objectives from previous grades.

WRITING OBJECTIVES - GRADE 3

A. SPELLING

1. Plurals
2. Long and short vowels
3. Consonant blends and digraphs
4. Contractions
5. Dipthongs
6. Inflectional endings
7. Simple Root Words
8. Words appropriate to the grade level (from Dolch Sight Words, etc.)
9. Substitution of initial and final consonants or consonant blends
10. Vowels controlled by "r, w, l"
11. Comparative endings
12. Use syllabications as an aid to spelling
13. Simple compound words
14. Rhyming words

B. PUNCTUATION

1. Use periods at end of declarative sentences
2. Use question marks after interrogative sentences
3. Use apostrophes--contractions
4. Use periods after abbreviations
5. Use commas to separate parts of a series
6. Use commas after salutation in a friendly letter
7. Use periods after initials
8. Use exclamation marks at end of exclamatory words or sentences
9. Use commas between month and year
10. Use quotation marks--dialogue

C. CAPITALIZATION

1. Beginning of a sentence
2. Proper nouns and adjectives
3. Abbreviations, eg. Mr., Mrs., St., Ave.
4. First word of a salutation of a letter
5. First and important words in titles
6. First word of a complimentary close
7. First word of a direct quote

D. HANDWRITING

1. Legibly write manuscript and cursive letters and numerals using the following as criteria: space, slant, size, shape, alignment

E. DICTIONARY USAGE AND STUDY SKILLS

1. Use beginning dictionary as an aid to meaning
2. Use table of contents
3. Use beginning dictionary as an aid to spelling

F. BASIC STRUCTURES (GRAMMAR, USAGE AND SYNTAX)

1. Identify and write declarative sentence types
2. Identify and write interrogative sentence types
3. Use correct form of inflected verb endings
4. Use correct form of verb tense
5. Use correct form of irregular verb forms
6. Use correct form of subject--verb agreement
7. Write simple and compound sentences

G. UNITY AND COHERENCE IN SENTENCES

1. Distinguish between sentences and fragments
2. Write complete sentences

H. UNITY AND COHERENCE IN PARAGRAPHS

1. Write paragraphs which focus on the topic
2. Write paragraphs that have appropriate beginnings, middles and endings
3. Write simple narrative paragraphs
4. Use supporting details in paragraphs
5. Write simple descriptive paragraphs
6. Write simple expository paragraphs

I. ORGANIZATION OF IDEAS

1. Organize by time
2. Organize by simple listing
3. Organize by place and space

J. SENTENCE AND PARAGRAPH ORGANIZATION

1. Use adjectives, adverbs and phrases to expand basic sentence patterns
2. Use varying length in sentences
3. Use compound sentences

K. STYLISTIC DEVICES AND LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

1. Use language to present verbal images of taste, smell, sound, feel (touch)
2. Use language to communicate feelings
3. Use vivid and descriptive words and phrases
4. Use correct format--paragraph indentation
5. Use correct format--margins

L. SOCIAL WRITING

1. Write friendly personal letters

M. SCHOLASTIC COMMUNICATION

1. Write simple stories (eg. personal, narrative, imaginative, etc.)
2. Write simple reports
3. Write simple directions

N PROOFREADING

1. Proofread for mechanics of writing (spelling, punctuation and capitalization)
2. Proofread for complete sentences

WRITING OBJECTIVES - GRADE 6

A. SPELLING

1. Prefixes and suffixes
2. Possessives
3. Homonyms
4. Irregular plurals
5. Words with silent letters
6. Doubling letters and adding endings
7. Multi-syllabic words appropriate to the grade 6 level as listed in the current words list

B. PUNCTUATION

1. End marks, eg. ., ?, !
2. Quotation marks
3. Use commas to separate articles in a series
4. Use commas to set off words of direct address
5. Use commas after introductory words, eg. yes, no, interjections
6. Use commas before the conjunction in a longer compound sentence
7. Use quotation marks for titles of stories, poems, songs, reports, articles and chapters of a book
8. Use underlining for titles of books, magazines, newspapers, plays and movies
9. Use colons after the salutation of a business letter

C. CAPITALIZATION

1. Titles of respect and rank and their abbreviations, eg. Rev., Dr.
2. First word of a direct quote
3. Titles
4. Names of organizations
5. Salutation and complimentary close
6. Sacred names

D. BASIC STRUCTURES (GRAMMAR, USAGE AND SYNTAX)

1. Subject verb agreement
2. Use correct form--consistent verb tense
3. Use correct form--associated adjectives and adverb forms, eg. good, well
4. Use correct form--associated verbs, eg. sit, set; lie, lay
5. Use correct form--negatives and avoiding double negatives
6. Use correct form--matching pronoun and antecedent
7. Use correct form--associated prepositions, eg. of, off; in, into

E. DICTIONARY USAGE AND STUDY SKILLS

1. Use dictionary as an aid to meaning
2. Use dictionary as an aid to pronunciation
3. Use dictionary as an aid to spelling

F. UNITY AND COHERENCE IN SENTENCES

1. Write complete sentences
2. Write appropriate topic sentence

G. UNITY AND COHERENCE IN PARAGRAPHS

1. Relate supporting details to main idea
2. Write descriptive paragraphs
3. Write narrative paragraphs
4. Write expository paragraphs

H. ORGANIZATION OF IDEAS

1. Evidence of some logical organization

I SENTENCE AND PARAGRAPH ORGANIZATION

1. Use variety in sentence patterns

J. STYLISTIC DEVICES AND LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

1. Use words correctly in context (meaning and function)
2. Use correct form--paragraph indentation for each change in speaker
3. Use appropriate homonyms, antonyms, synonyms and multiple meaning words
4. Use descriptive and precise vocabulary
5. Write with purpose or intent
6. Use correct form--business letter

K. SOCIAL WRITING

1. Write friendly letters--thank you
2. Write friendly letters --invitation

L. BUSINESS/VOCATIONAL

1. Write business letters--ordering an item

M. SCHOLASTIC COMMUNICATION

1. Write stories that include character, setting and plot
2. Write a narrative essay
3. Write a descriptive essay
4. Write an expository essay

N. PROOFREADING

1. Proofread for sentence structure
2. Proofread for mechanics of writing (spelling, punctuation and capitalization)
3. Proofread for correct usage
4. Proofread for variety in sentence structure

WRITING OBJECTIVES - GRADE 9

A. SPELLING

1. Most frequently misspelled words due to mispronunciations and confusibles
2. Frequently confused suffixes--eg. - ance, -ence

B. PUNCTUATION

1. Use quotation marks
2. Use semicolons to separate parts of a compound sentence when a conjunction is not used
3. Use commas before and after parenthetical expressions when no parenthesis are used
4. Use colons before a long series or list
5. Use commas before and after non-restrictive clause

C. CAPITALIZATION

1. Apply capitalization consistently

D. HANDWRITING

1. Legibly write manuscript and cursive letters and numerals using the following as criteria: space, slant, size, shape, alignment

E. BASIC STRUCTURES OF ENGLISH (GRAMMAR, USAGE AND SYNTAX)

1. Use correct forms--main and subordinate clauses
2. Use correct forms--parallel structure
3. Use correct forms--prepositional phrases
4. Use correct forms--active and passive voices
5. Use correct forms--phrases that begin with verbals
6. Use affixes correctly
7. Use correct forms--balanced sentences
8. Use correct forms--collective nouns
9. Use compound-complex sentences
10. Identify the functions of the participle
11. Identify the functions of the gerund

F. DICTIONARY USAGE AND STUDY SKILLS

1. Show proficiency in the use of the dictionary as an aid to spelling, meaning and pronunciation
2. Locate and use a wide variety of references
3. Show proficiency in the use of a thesaurus as an aid to word selection and idiomatic usage

G. UNITY AND COHERENCE IN SENTENCES

1. Write complete sentences
2. Write appropriate topic sentences
3. Use appropriate transitional words and phrases for organizing by comparison and contrast and order of importance
4. Expand sentences by supplying details which use modifying phrases, clauses and appropriate connectives

H. UNITY AND COHERENCE IN PARAGRAPHS

1. Use appropriate topic sentences
2. Write expository paragraphs
3. Write a beginning and ending paragraph suitable to the mode, purpose and format of the writing
4. Keep point of view consistent

Unity and Coherence in Paragraphs (continued)

5. Write persuasive paragraphs
6. Use both first and third person point of view appropriately

I. ORGANIZATION OF IDEAS

1. Select and use appropriate supporting details such as: factual details, statistics and authoritative opinion
2. Organize ideas by order of importance--most to least
3. Organize ideas by cause and effect--cause-effect chains

J. SENTENCE AND PARAGRAPH ORGANIZATION

1. Use varying sentence structures to emphasize ideas, to effect transitions and create effect
2. Place topic sentence in appropriate position depending on writing purpose
3. Use techniques of word choice, sentence construction and the selection and organization of details to establish mood

K. STYLISTIC DEVICES AND LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

1. Avoid use of overworked words and phrases (eg. nice, pretty)
2. Use appropriate tone (formal, informal)

L. SOCIAL WRITING

1. Write messages
2. Write friendly letters (eg. announcements)

M. BUSINESS/VOCATIONAL

1. Write business letters--simple letters of application
2. Write business letters--complaint
3. Write business letters--opinion
4. Write business letters--letter to the editor

N. SCHOLASTIC COMMUNICATION

1. Write a summary
2. Write using a biographical format--biography
3. Write short stories that include characterization, setting, and plot elements of opening situation, middle complication, climax and outcome
4. Use reporting formats--essay
5. Write book reports
6. Write folk tales--myth
7. Write folk tales--legend

O. PROOFREADING

1. Proofread reports for accuracy
2. Proofread for word choice and usage
3. Proofread for consistency of viewpoint

WRITING OBJECTIVES - GRADE 12

A. SPELLING

1. Mastery of most frequently misspelled words due to mispronunciations
2. Correctly spell an extensive vocabulary of multi-syllabic words

B. PUNCTUATION

1. Apply punctuation rules consistently
2. Use underlining to indicate italics

C. CAPITALIZATION

1. Apply capitalization rules consistently

D. BASIC STRUCTURES OF ENGLISH (GRAMMAR, USAGE AND SYNTAX)

1. Vary the way sentence elements are ordered for emphasis and clarity
2. Use parallel structures
3. Use balanced sentences
4. Use correlatives for emphasis and clarity, eg. either and or, where and there

E. DICTIONARY USAGE AND STUDY SKILLS

1. Increase proficiency in word selection and idiomatic usage through use of such references as a thesaurus

F. UNITY AND COHERENCE IN SENTENCES

1. Write sentences which exclude redundance and excessive lengthiness

G. UNITY AND COHERENCE IN PARAGRAPHS

1. Keep style and mood and point of view consistent
2. Use logical order, eg. chronological, spatial, importance
3. Write analysis paragraphs
4. Write argumentative paragraphs
5. Write personal anecdote paragraphs

H. ORGANIZATION OF IDEAS

1. Support opinions with logic and/or facts
2. Organize ideas by induction and deduction
3. Organize ideas by definition--example
4. Organize ideas by definition--differentiation
5. Organize ideas by comparison and contract (eg. analogies)

I. SENTENCE AND PARAGRAPH ORGANIZATION

1. Maintain consistency of style
2. Use or implied use of topic sentence
3. Extend the use of a variety of sentence structures for effect
4. Effective use of transitions

J. STYLISTIC DEVICES AND LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

1. Identify irrelevant statements
2. Write without using cliches
3. Project individuality and originality
4. Use semantic insight
5. Use literary devices--analogy
6. Use literary devices--symbolism
7. Use figurative language--extended metaphor
8. Use literary devices--irony
9. Use literary devices--satire

K. BUSINESS/VOCATIONAL WRITING

1. Write business letters--letter of application
2. Write resume

L. SCHOLASTIC COMMUNICATION

1. Write essays--formal
2. Write an opinion which reflects attention to the overall content of an argument or discussion
3. Write precis
4. Write argumentative prose
5. Write essays--personal
6. Write short stories based on universal themes that include dynamic characterization, conflict, plot and subplot

M. PROOFREADING

1. Proofread for validity and plausibility of ideas
2. Proofread for clarity of thought and organization
3. Proofread for purpose and intent
4. Proofread for word choice and usage
5. Proofread for mechanics (spelling, punctuation, capitalization)

REGIONAL MEETINGS FOR THE PRIORIZATION OF WRITING SKILLS

Carman Collegiate
Carman
Monday, January 22, 1979
10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Manitoba Teachers' Society
Portage Avenue at Harcourt
Wednesday, January 24, 1979
10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Manitoba Teachers' Society
Portage Avenue at Harcourt
Thursday, January 25, 1979
10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Crocus Plains Regional Secondary School
1st Street and Maryland, Brandon
Monday, January 29, 1979
10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Dauphin Regional Secondary School
330 Mountain Road, Dauphin
Tuesday, January 30, 1979
10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Margaret Barbour Collegiate
The Pas, Manitoba
Thursday, February 1, 1979
10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

APPENDIX C

PARTICIPANTS IN THE PILOT TESTING

WRITING SKILLS ASSESSMENT - PILOT

GRADE	SCHOOL	DIV.	CITY/TOWN	TEACHER	NO.
3	Morden Elementary	47	Morden	Ms. A. Clark	22
3	Meadows Elementary	40	Brandon	Ms. H. Johnston	19
3	Meadows Elemenatry	40	Brandon	Ms. M. Crandle	25
3	Kelsey Elementary	45	The Pas	Ms. Lagimodiere	20
3	Robert Browning	2	Winnipeg	Ms. B. Lewis	24
3	Dufferin	1	Winnipeg	Ms. I. Cook	16
6					126
6	Winkler Elementary	26	Winkler	Ms. E. Elsholtz	16
6	Winkler Elementary	26	Winkler	Mr. L. Holppner	23
6	Mary Duncan Elementary	45	The Pas	Mr. H. Buchholz	30
6	Columbus	2	Winnipeg	Ms. R. Breckman	23
6	Wellington	1	Winnipeg	Mr. N. Calof	24
6	Meadows	40	Brandon	Mr. E. Klassen	23
6					139
9	Garden Valley Coll.	26	Winkler	Mr. J. Schellenberg	22
9	Margaret Barbour	45	The Pas	Ms. A. Wilson	19
9	Lincoln	2	Winnipeg	Ms. Engbrecht	28
9	Cecil Rhodes	1	Winnipeg	Ms. J. Luchak	20
9	Vincent Massey	40	Brandon	Ms. R. Bradshaw	28
5					117
12	Carman Collegiate	25	Carman	Ms. Shewchuk	36
12	Morden Collegiate	47	Morden	Mr. N. Poetker	22
12	Margaret Barbour	45	The Pas	Ms. N. Muir	21
12	Westwood Collegiate	2	Winnipeg	Ms. A. Young	23
12	Dakota Collegiate	6	Winnipeg	Ms. E. Pearce	48
12	Gordon Bell	1	Winnipeg	W. Patterson	50
12	Vincent Massey	5	Winnipeg	Ms. S. Siddioui	30
7					230
24				TOTAL	612

161

APPENDIX D

SCORING OF THE WRITING TESTS

Regional Inservices--Holistic Scoring
Scorers for the Provincial Sample

Regional Inservices--Holistic Scoring

DATE	TIME	LOCATION
Tuesday, April 17	1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.	Deerwood School 101 Beaver Crescent Thompson, Manitoba
Tuesday, April 17	1;00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.	Multi-Purpose Room Dauphin Regional Comprehensive Secondary School 220 Mountain Road Dauphin, Manitoba
Wednesday, April 18	1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.	Margaret Barbour Collegiate Smith Street The Pas, Manitoba
Wednesday, April 18	1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.	Lecture Theatre Crocus Plains Regional Secondary School 1930 - 1st Street Brandon, Manitoba
Thursday, April 19	9:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon	Auditorium Manitoba Teachers' Society Portage at Harcourt Winnipeg, Manitoba
Thursday, April 19	1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.	Auditorium Manitoba Teachers' Society Portage at Harcourt Winnipeg, Manitoba
Friday, April 20	9:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon	Junior Science Room Carman Collegiate Carman, Manitoba

Scorers for the Provincial Sample

Dr. D. MacNaughton
J. Shaw
H.W. Schulz

Scorers

GRADE 3:

A. Day, Winnipeg
A. Hart, King George V. School, Winnipeg
M. Henderson, Carman Elementary School, Carman
B. Holden, Hamiota Elementary School, Hamiota
L. Hunt, Maple Leaf School, Morden
I. Kordalchuk, Selkirk
R. Kulbacki, Gilbert Plains School, Gilbert Plains
R. Neill, Kelwood Elementary School, Kelwood
E. Rex, Sanford
E. Sanders, Winnipeg
M. Sedor, Fork River School, Fork River
E. Shostak, Westview School, Winnipeg
E. Stopera, Waldheim Colony School, Elie
L. Sutherland, Winnipeg

GRADE 6:

B. Bastable, Mapleton School, Selkirk
C. Bolster, Winnipeg
A. Bowman, Winnipeg
M. Brooks, Winnipeg
R. Carmichael, Winnipeg
E. Cockrell, Sanford
R. Covranten, Morris School, Morris
P. Deszycia, Winnipeg
E. Grills, Sanford
I. Jarnault, Notre Dame Elementary, Notre Dame de Lourdes
L. Nahachewsky, Greenwood School, Canadian Forces Base Shilo
I. Reynolds, Cecil Rhodes School, Winnipeg
M. September, Winnipeg
M. Toews, Elmdale School, Steinbach
R. Vasey, Winnipeg
G. Wishart, Winnipeg

GRADE 9:

R. Cabel, Winnipeg
J. Hildebrand, Shevchenko School, Vita
L. Jones, Winnipeg
D. Kozier, Lincoln School, Winnipeg

GRADE 9 (continued):

W. Lasuik, Swan River Junior High School, Swan River
H. Leggitt, Jefferson Junior High School, Winnipeg
B. MacTavish, Margaret Barbour Collegiate, The Pas
T. McGonagale, Garden Valley Collegiate, Winkler
M. Nesbitt, Riverton Collegiate, Riverton
E. Outhwaite, Winnipeg
A. Peters, Winnipeg
D. Plamondon, Souris School, Souris
S. Purvis, Selkirk
F. Queau, R.D. Parker Collegiate, Thompson
B. Robson, Winnipeg
J. Simmons, Princess Elizabeth School, Canadian Forces Base Shilo
N. Somers, Boissevain School, Boissevain
J. Somner, Winnipeg
D. Wuckert, Winnipeg
B. Zimmerman, Winnipeg

GRADE 12:

B. Bilan, Oak Park High School, Winnipeg
C. Bjarnason, Winnipeg
W. Cowan, Winnipeg
S. Engbrecht, Winnipeg
N. Fullerton, Fort Richmond Collegiate, Winnipeg
H. Gunning, Killarney School, Killarney
D. Hall, Warren Collegiate, Warren
J. Kerr, Erickson Collegiate, Erickson
H. Levi, Glenboro School, Glenboro
J. Lovelace, Ecole Ste. Anne, Ste.-Anne-des-Chenes
P. McBurney, River East Collegiate, Winnipeg
J. Meagher, Winnipeg
F. Pallone, Winnipeg
J. Pehura, Portage Collegiate, Portage la Prairie
A. Ramkisson, Winnipeg

APPENDIX E

RESULTS INTERPRETATION FOR THE WRITING ASSESSMENT

Tasks of the Interpretation Panel
Interpretation Panel Composition

Tasks of the Interpretation Panel

Part of the task of evaluating student performance is the interpretation of the assessment results. The assessments are estimates of levels of performance of students, but these levels must be evaluated as to their quality or adequacy. At this point no adequate performance standards are available from past years. Also, criterion performance levels based on general rules--e.g., "50% correct is necessary to pass an objective"--are arbitrary and are not dependent on the skill in question. Thus performance levels must be adjudicated in a different manner.

Some interpretation of the assessment results has been attempted by persons already involved in the Writing Assessment Program (particularly, those in the Technical Advisory Committee). It is useful, however, to obtain the interpretations of an independent group of persons who could be expected to have knowledge of both student capabilities and the subject matter. This group constitutes the Interpretation Panel and consists of Language Arts teachers and other educational experts as well as representatives of the public.

Purpose of the Panel. The Interpretation Panel determines the adequacy of student performance in Writing. Since the Writing Assessment test was designed to assess a number of separable objectives performance expectations and interpretations must be made for each of the objectives.

Procedure. Four judgements must be made in the interpretation process, two of them are done individually and two are by group consensus. Panels are separated by grade level so that Panel members only make judgements at their designated grade.

1. Expected Achievement--Individual members estimate for each objective the level of performance that could reasonably be expected on average. This would be the average obtained by Manitoba students at the specified grade level under good teaching conditions. For the most part this is stated as an average expected percentage correct, thereby simplifying the process for objectives with different scales and numbers of items. For some objectives the format is different--this will be indicated prior to that objective.

2. Consensus Expected Achievement--Grade level Panels will collaborate to obtain a consensus level of Expected Achievement. If a consensus proves impossible the arithmetic average of individual estimates is used.

   After a consensus is obtained Panels will enter this on their form adjacent to the individual judgement.

3. Interpretation--Individual members will enter the Actual Achievement of students and interpret it according to the Achievement Interpretation Scale. This will be done for each objective in turn.

ACHIEVEMENT INTERPRETATION SCALE

5 = Highly Satisfactory: Actual achievement is well beyond what is expected. This is considered to be an area of strength.

4 = Satisfactory: Actual achievement is somewhat beyond what is expected.

3 = Acceptable: Actual achievement corresponds approximately with what is expected.

2 = Marginal: Actual achievement is somewhat below what is expected, but not to the point of being totally unacceptable. This is considered to be an area where some additional work is considered desirable.

1 = Unsatisfactory: Actual achievement is well below what is expected. This is considered to be an area of weakness and remediation is deemed necessary.

4. Consensus Interpretation--Grade level Panels will collaborate to obtain a consensus level of Achievement Interpretation. This will be used to determine the adequacy of student performance on the particular objective. If a consensus cannot be obtained the arithmetic average of individual interpretations is used.

An Example Interpretation is given below:

Grade 3

III. Writing Asking Sentences (Test p. 5, Manual p. 5)

(Numbers are the percentages of students who achieve/should achieve at each category level.)

Response Category	Expected Achievement		Achievement	Interpretation	
	Individual	Consensus		Individual	Consensus
Correct	30	30	33	3	3.2
Word and/or Word Order Error	40	30	25		
Capitalization and/or Punctuation Error	10	10	19		
Multiple Error	20	30	23		

Interpretation Panel Composition

Dr. D. MacNaughton
J. Shaw
H. Schulz

Interpretation Panels

Grade 3:

G. Fowler, Harold Hatcher School, Winnipeg
N. Harvey, Manitoba Association of School Trustees
L. Henley, Bonnycastle Elementary School, Winnipeg
A. Plohman, Ashern Central School, Ashern
M.A. Robertson, Ruth Betts School, Flin Flon
B. Shale, Arthur Oliver School, Winnipeg

Grade 6:

V. Alksnis, Manitoba Association of School Trustees
C. Halligan,
I. Hamberg, Betty Gibson School, Brandon
D. Reynold, Child Development Support Services, Winnipeg
N. Shewchuk,
P. Smalley, Ruth Betts School, Flin Flon

Grade 9:

C. Anderson, Earl Oxford School, Brandon
K. Peters, Steinbach Junior High School, Steinbach
J. Ryan, Rockwood School, Winnipeg
R. Sanford, University of Manitoba, Winnipeg
H. Vanderstoel, Garden City Collegiate, Winnipeg
M. Zimmerman, Manitoba Association of School Trustees

Grade 12:

M.C. Brown, Kelvin High School, Winnipeg
D. Cronk, Dauphin,Regional Composite Secondary School, Dauphin
G. Dureault,
J. Thompson, Sanford Collegiate, Sanford
S. Wieler, Windsor Park Collegiate, Winnipeg
(Manitoba Association of School Trustees designate was unable to attend.)

APPENDIX F

TESTS AND TEST MANUALS

WRITING ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

Grade 3 Test, Manual
Grade 6 Test, Manual
Grade 9 Test, Manual
Grade 12 Test, Manual

WRITING ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

MEASUREMENT & EVALUATION BRANCH

GRADE 3

MANITOBA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

251

NAME _____ _____
(Last) (First)

DATE OF BIRTH _____ _____ _____
(Month) (Day) (Year)

SEX Male ☐ Female ☐

COURSE 300 ☐ 301 ☐ Other _____

PART I

I. DIRECTIONS: In each of the spaces provided, write the word which is dictated by the teacher.

1. _____ 12. _____

2. _____ 13. _____

3. _____ 14. _____

4. _____ 15. _____

5. _____ 16. _____

6. _____ 17. _____

7. _____ 18. _____

8. _____ 19. _____

9. _____ 20. _____

10. _____ 21. _____

11. _____

* * * * *

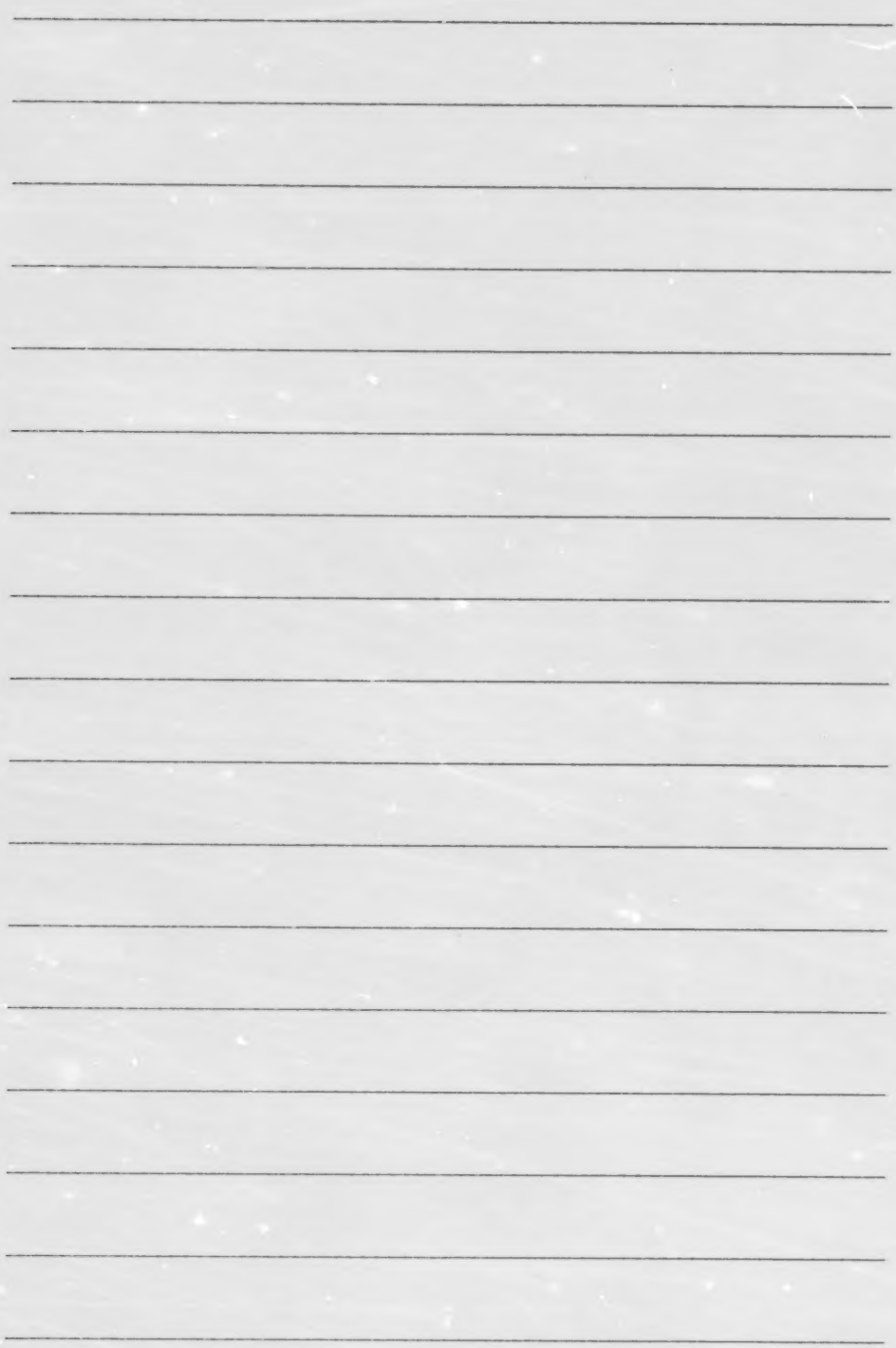
II. DIRECTIONS: Write a story about what happened to Pat and the creature.

Remember that an interesting story has a beginning, middle, and ending. Write your story in the space below.

One night Pat climbed into bed and quickly fell asleep.

Then a most exciting thing happened. In a dream a strange creature took Pat on an adventure.

GO TO THE NEXT PAGE



PART II

I. DIRECTIONS: Some of the PUNCTUATION MARKS and CAPITAL LETTERS are missing in these sentences. Find each mistake and make the correction in the sentence. DO NOT REWRITE THE SENTENCE.

EXAMPLE: Will you come on sunday

1. do you live in manitoba

2. why couldnt you go to the farm

3. maybe mr. and mrs. smith will let us play on the swings

4. we live in a country called canada

5. we wont visit dr. black next time

II. DIRECTIONS: Write a TELLING SENTENCE using each group of words. You will have to add words to make your sentence.

EXAMPLE: sun, sky, shone

_____

1. river, dog, swam

TELLING SENTENCE _____

_____

2. tree, wind, whistled

TELLING SENTENCE _____

_____

3. boy, girl, yells

TELLING SENTENCE _____

_____

III. DIRECTIONS: Write an ASKING SENTENCE using each group of words. You will have to add words to make your sentence.

EXAMPLE: you, kite, fly

_____

1. cat, bird, chase

ASKING SENTENCE _____

_____

2. egg, pan, fry

ASKING SENTENCE _____

_____

3. fire, wood, burn

ASKING SENTENCE _____

_____

IV. DIRECTIONS: Add words to each of the following to make a sentence.

EXAMPLE: All the children _____ in school.

1. A big dog _____.

2. The animals were _____ in the pond.

3. The striped tiger had _____ the lion in the jungle.

4. _____ were sitting in the car.

5. Yesterday the circus _____

_____

6. Kelly was the _____ runner among all the children.

7. Today Jack _____.

8. The growling bears _____.

9. Next week my aunt _____.

V. DIRECTIONS: Circle the following groups of words which are sentences.

EXAMPLE: Along the riverbank
The pet is in the cage

1. Like a busy bee

2. Across the wire fence

3. We have a black cat

4. I like to eat popcorn

5. To the end of the town

6. Our house is very big

7. The dog barked loudly

8. The man with grey hair

9. My wagon is broken

WRITING ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

MEASUREMENT & EVALUATION BRANCH

GRADE 3

MANUAL

MANITOBA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

WRITING SKILLS ASSESSMENT--GRADE 3

The Measurement and Evaluation Branch of the Manitoba Department of Education is administering the Writing Skills Assessment Test in order to gather information relative to the strengths and weaknesses of student writing skills at the provincial level. The Writing Skills Assessment Test can also assist teachers in evaluating student achievement in the component writing skills of spelling, capitalization, punctuation, grammar and language usage, sentence construction and paragraph development.

Test Format

Part I - Spelling and Written Product

Part II - Specific Skills - Capitalization and Punctuation
- Sentence Writing
- Sentence Completion
- Sentence Identification

Required Materials

1. Testing Instructions
2. Student Test Booklets
3. Pencils

TESTING INSTRUCTIONS

1. Read all instructions carefully before administering the test.

2. Instruct students not to open the test booklets until told to do so.

3. Have each student provide the information required on the cover page.

4. Instruct students to write all answers in the test booklet.

5. If the transition from manuscript to cursive writing is not complete, the teacher may wish to instruct the students to use manuscript writing for a part of or all of the test.

6. Grade 3 Teachers are requested to follow the instructions given below when administering the test:

   (a) Read the directions to the students.
   (b) Where a sample item is given, write it on the chalkboard and have the students complete the item in their test booklets.
   (c) After the examples are discussed, instruct the students to begin the section, and to work until they reach the STOP sign.
   (d) Have the students write the test in two sittings--SITTING ONE: approximately 35 minutes. SITTING TWO: approximately 35 minutes. (The suggested break between sittings is recess.)
   (e) Dictate the spelling words to the students. Use the sentences on the following page.

7. When students have completed both parts of the test, check that each test has the required information on the cover, and collect the tests.

8. Return test booklets per instructions from the Measurement and Evaluation Branch.

TEST ADMINISTRATION

PART I

I. SPELLING

The teacher will say: Write the words I dictate on the line beside each number.

The teacher will: pronounce the word, use the word in the sentence, pronounce the word a second time.

hope	1.	I hope I get a bicycle for my birthday.	hope
it's	2.	I think that it's going to be a cloudy day.	it's
because	3.	I can't go because it's too far.	because
shelter	4.	When it rains I run to the house for shelter.	shelter
dishes	5.	Two dishes broke when they fell on the floor.	dishes
bought	6.	Grandfather bought a new car.	bought
catch	7.	Can you catch the ball?	catch
I'll	8.	I'll come back after lunch.	I'll
talks	9.	The parrot talks and screeches.	talks
rabbits	10.	The three rabbits hopped into the garden.	rabbits
feet	11.	My feet were very cold.	feet
don't	12.	I don't know whether I can go.	don't
swimming	13.	The children didn't go swimming.	swimming
owl	14.	The owl hooted in the forest.	owl
their	15.	It seems that their car is always broken.	their
babies	16.	Our mother cat has four babies.	babies
helper	17.	Teacher said I was her best helper.	helper
bump	18.	There was a very big bump on his head.	bump
brown	19.	The brown horse galloped across the field.	brown
split	20.	The tree trunk split in two.	split
noise	21.	The noise was very loud.	noise

II. WRITTEN PRODUCT

The teacher will say: You are going to write a story. I will read the directions and the first part of the story to you.

After reading the directions and the story beginning to the students, the teacher will say: Notice that the first part of the story has already been written on the lines. Write your story on the rest of the lines.

PART II

I. PUNCTUATION and CAPITALIZATION

The teacher will say: Some of the Punctuation marks and Capital letters are missing in the sentences. First look at the example which I will write on the chalkboard. Let's make the corrections in the sentence. Now make the same corrections in the example in your test booklet.

EXAMPLE: Will you come on sunday

CORRECTED EXAMPLE: Will you come on Sunday?

After discussion of the sample item is complete, the teacher will say: Make the corrections for the five sentences in your test booklet. Do not rewrite the sentences.

II. SENTENCE WRITING: TELLING SENTENCES

The teacher will say: You are going to write TELLING SENTENCES. You are to add words to each group of words to make a Telling sentence. First I will write an example on the chalkboard. Let's add words to make a TELLING SENTENCE. Write the TELLING SENTENCE in the space in your test booklet.

EXAMPLE: sun, sky, shone

SUGGESTED ANSWER: The sun shone in the sky.

After discussion of the sample item is complete, the teacher will say: Write TELLING SENTENCES for questions 1, 2, and 3 by adding words to each group of words.

III. SENTENCE WRITING: ASKING SENTENCES

The teacher will say: You are going to write ASKING SENTENCES. You are to add words to each group of words to make an Asking sentence. First I will write an example on the chalkboard. Let's add words to make an ASKING SENTENCE. Write the ASKING SENTENCE in your test booklet.

EXAMPLE: you, kite, fly

SUGGESTED ANSWER: Can you fly a kite?

After discussion of the sample item is complete, the teacher will say: Write ASKING SENTENCES for questions 1, 2, and 3 by adding words to each group of words.

IV. SENTENCE COMPLETION

The teacher will say: In each of the questions in section IV, you are going to add words to make a sentence. First I will write an example on the chalkboard. Let's add words to make it into a sentence. Then complete the example in your test booklet.

EXAMPLE: All the children _____ in school.

SUGGESTED ANSWER: All the children were sitting in school.

After discussion of the sample item is complete, the teacher will say: Add words to each of the questions in section IV to make sentences.

V. SENTENCE IDENTIFICATION

The teacher will say: Some of the groups of words are sentences and some are parts of sentences. You are to circle all the groups of words which are sentences. First I'll write two sentences on the chalkboard. Which one is a sentence? Circle that sentence in the example in your test booklet.

EXAMPLE: Along the riverbank
The pet is in the cage

After discussion of the sample item is complete, the teacher will say: Now circle all the groups of words in section V which are sentences.

KEY and MARKING SCALES[1]

GRADE 3 WRITING

PART I

I. SPELLING

MARKING SCALE
1 = Correct
0 = Incorrect

KEY*

1.	hope	12.	don't
2.	it's	13.	swimming
3.	because	14.	owl
4.	shelter	15.	their
5.	dishes	16.	babies
6.	bought	17.	helper
7.	catch	18.	bump
8.	I'll	19.	brown
9.	talks	20.	split
10.	rabbits	21.	noise
11.	feet		

SPELLING ITEMS KEYED TO OBJECTIVES

Item #'s	Objective
1, 11, 18	1. Vowels
5, 10, 16	2. Plurals
6, 14, 21	3. Diphthongs
2, 8, 12	4. Contractions
3, 15, 19	5. Dolch
4, 7, 20	6. Blends
9, 13, 17	7. Endings

* Don't count capitalization except on #8.

[1] Suggested marking scales are for those teachers who wish to give papers a % score. They are suggestions only, and may be modified. Provincial reports will give mean scores only (e.g. Out of 21 spelling words on the grade 3 test, the mean for the province was 18.2 correct.)

II. WRITTEN PRODUCT

HOLISTIC MARKING SCALE

5 = Highly Impressive - well above average in thought, sentence structure and word choice, mostly free from error

4 = Commendable - in command of thought, sentence structure and word choice, relatively free from error

3 = Questionable - probably functional in terms of thought, sentence structure and word choice but in need of instruction

2 = Minimal - in need of remediation--frustration level

1 = Insufficient Material

Suggested mark allotment for story is 24 marks. These marks may be allotted as teacher wishes.

Objective	Scale
1. Focus on topic	4 = Ideas relate to topic 3 = Fluctuation but focus is on topic 2 = Deviates from topic 1 = Insufficient evidence
2. Middle and ending	4 = Includes appropriate middle and ending 3 = Lacks one element 2 = Lacks more than one element 1 = Insufficient evidence
3. Organize by time (Verb tense and sequence of events)	4 = Ideas appropriately organized by time 3 = Error in organization by time (one error) 2 = Error in organization by time (more than one error) 1 = Insufficient evidence
4. Descriptive words and phrases	4 = Use of descriptive words and phrases to create impact 3 = Word choice ordinary and functional 2 = Insufficient use of vocabulary indicated 1 = Insufficient evidence
5. Topic development (Communicate feelings, creative)	4 = Originality of ideas creates impact 3 = Ideas ordinary and functional 2 = Insufficient number of ideas 1 = Insufficient evidence
6. Complete sentences	4 = Writes complete sentences (no errors) 3 = Error in writing complete sentences (1 or 2 errors) 2 = Errors in writing complete sentences (more than 2) 1 = Insufficient evidence
7. Sentence structure	4 = Varies sentence lengths and patterns to create impact 3 = Varies sentence lengths and patterns but doesn't create impact 2 = Does not use varying sentence lengths and patterns 1 = Insufficient material
8. Punctuation and Capitalization	4 = Capitalizes and punctuates correctly (0-2 errors) 3 = Errors in capitalization and punctuation (3-4 errors) 2 = Errors in capitalization and punctuation (more than 4 errors) 1 = Insufficient evidence
9. Spelling	4 = Spelling attracts little or no attention 3 = Several errors which do not detract from impact 2 = Errors detract from readability and impression 1 = Insufficient evidence

PART II

I. PUNCTUATION and CAPITALIZATION

MARKING SCALE
1 = Correct
0 = Incorrect

KEY

1. Do you live in Manitoba?
2. Why couldn't you go to the farm?
3. Maybe Mr. and Mrs. Smith will let us play on the swings.(!)
4. We live in a country called Canada.
5. We won't visit Dr. Black next time.

PUNCTUATION AND CAPITALIZATION ITEMS KEYED TO OBJECTIVES

Item #'s	Objective
	Capitalization
1, 4, 7, 12, 15	1. Beginning of sentence
2, 10, 13, 18	2. Proper noun
8, 9, 17	3. Abbreviation
	Punctuation
3, 6	1. Question mark at end of sentence
11, 14, 19	2. Period at end of sentence
5, 16	3. Apostrophe for contraction

II. SENTENCE WRITING: TELLING SENTENCE

MARKING SCALE
3 = no errors
2 = word or word order error
2 = capitalization and/or punctuation error
0 = multiple error

KEY

Write a TELLING SENTENCE which includes the three words or derived forms given in the test.

III. SENTENCE WRITING: ASKING SENTENCE

MARKING SCALE

3 = no errors
2 = word or word order error
2 = capitalization and/or punctuation error
0 = multiple error

KEY

Write an ASKING SENTENCE which includes the three words or derived forms given in the test.

IV. SENTENCE COMPLETION

MARKING SCALE

1 = Correct
0 = Incorrect

KEY

Write COMPLETE SENTENCES by adding words to the partial sentence.

SENTENCE COMPLETION KEYED TO OBJECTIVES

Item #'s	Objective
1, 4, 8	1. Subject-verb agreement
2, 3, 6	2. Inflected ending
5, 7, 9	3. Verb tense

V. SENTENCE IDENTIFICATION

MARKING SCALE

1 = Correct
0 = Incorrect

KEY

Circle sentences 3, 4, 6, 7, 9

KEY TO SENTENCE IDENTIFICATION

Item #'s	
3, 4, 6, 7, 9	Complete sentences
1, 2, 5, 8	Incomplete sentences

WRITING ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

MEASUREMENT & EVALUATION BRANCH

GRADE 6

MANITOBA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

271

NAME _____ _____
(Last) (First)

DATE OF BIRTH _____ _____ _____
(Month) (Day) (Year)

SEX Male ☐ Female ☐

COURSE 300 ☐ 301 ☐ Other _____

PART I

I. DIRECTIONS: In each of the spaces provided, write the word which is dictated by the teacher.

1.	_____	13.	_____
2.	_____	14.	_____
3.	_____	15.	_____
4.	_____	16.	_____
5.	_____	17.	_____
6.	_____	18.	_____
7.	_____	19.	_____
8.	_____	20.	_____
9.	_____	21.	_____
10.	_____	22.	_____
11.	_____	23.	_____
12.	_____	24.	_____

II. DIRECTIONS: Some of the PUNCTUATION MARKS and CAPITAL LETTERS are missing in the following sentences. Find the mistakes and make the corrections by marking in the necessary punctuation marks and capital letters. DO NOT REWRITE THE SENTENCE.

1. My friend remarked, it seems to me pat that you did not try very hard to see prime minister collins

2. Yes I remember the story called "shadows in the forest" which was about the bats bears and baboons

3. The cleaning woman shrieked, professor black you must remember to lock the cupboard so the snakes bugs and spiders can't escape

4. My father asked, did you have to lay your hand on a bible and promise loyalty to queen elizabeth when you became a boy scout

5. Yes a gift of hockey sweaters baseball bats and soccer balls was made to bowness elementary school by eaton's department store

6. Sandy have you read the poem called "miracles" and the story called "good news" which tell about god and jesus

GO TO THE NEXT PAGE

III. DIRECTIONS: UNDERLINE the correct form in each of the following sentences.

1. When Cathy and Jane returned (she, they) found the house empty.
2. Our family (was, were) going to Calgary in our new car.
3. He usually does his work (good, well).
4. Kim hasn't (anything, nothing) to say about the broken window.
5. She has often (sang, sung) in the church choir.
6. Swinging Sam will (teach, learn) you how to play the drums.
7. Unless I can go (to, too), I will be most unhappy.
8. John was (bit, bitten) by a snake while he was walking along the river.
9. Please (sit, set) the box on the highest shelf.
10. I didn't have (no, any) choice but to hit him.
11. It seems that our dog is (most, almost) always sleeping.
12. Ted hurt (hisself, himself) when he fell out of the tree.
13. They divided the money (among, between) the two of them.
14. There (was, were) many students at the picnic.
15. I was (forth, fourth) in line so I had a good choice of the chocolate bars.
16. I (can, can't) hardly catch my breath.
17. I think the money will be (stole, stolen) if you leave it there.
18. Run (in, into) the house and find your baseball glove.
19. Put more (flour, flower) into the cake next time so it isn't so flat.
20. Both of our dogs (needs, need) a soapy bath.
21. (Who's, Whose) name is on the envelope?
22. The driver of the race car drove (real, really) fast.
23. Swimming across the river is dangerous because (it has, they have) strong currents.
24. My uncle turned his truck back (on, onto) the gravel road.

GO TO THE NEXT PAGE

IV. DIRECTIONS: Read the directions for each of the following sections. Write sentences using the given directions. (Use correct punctuation, capitalization, and spelling when writing your sentences.)

A. Use the ideas from the two sentences to write one complete sentence for each question. You may add or leave out words.

1. Jack went home from school early. He had the measles.

_____

_____

2. The abandoned house was near the town. The house was used by hitchhikers.

_____

_____

B. Rewrite each sentence and make it more interesting by adding at least three descriptive words or phrases.

1. The man was sitting by the fire.

_____

_____

2. The squirrel climbed the tree.

_____

_____

GO TO THE NEXT PAGE

C. Rewrite the following sentences. Place in its correct position any misplaced word or word group.

1. The lady sat on a park bench with a long dress.

_____

_____

2. There was a picture of my brother and me paddling a canoe on the dining-room table.

_____

_____

D. Rewrite the two sentences into one sentence.

1. The principal will be at the meeting. The mayor will be at the meeting.

_____

_____

2. I like to go camping and fishing. My friend likes to go camping and fishing.

_____

_____

GO TO THE NEXT PAGE

E. Rewrite the following sentences correctly.

1. The instructions were to take his lunch from home and eating it at one o'clock.

_____

_____

2. To be fair and being honest are rules of good sportsmanship.

_____

_____

F. Write the kind of sentence asked for in each question. Use the given words as indicated. You may add words to make your sentence.

1. Kind of sentence - question
   subject - snowmobile
   verb - hit
   object - tree

_____

_____

2. Kind of sentence - negative statement
   subject - cougar
   verb - attack
   object - camper

_____

_____

GO TO THE NEXT PAGE

G. Rewrite the following sentences and make the necessary corrections.

1. Throughout the story appears several characters who are villains.

_____

_____

2. Accompanying the band was the principal and two teachers from our school.

_____

_____

H. Rewrite the following sentences and make the necessary corrections.

1. He was studying she was watching her favorite program on television.

_____

_____

2. Just then we saw Max crawling up his arm was a spider.

_____

_____

PART II

DIRECTIONS: You have been given the beginnings for three stories. Choose ONE of them and finish the story. Make sure your story is well-organized and contains a variety of descriptive words and phrases. Pay attention to all the writing skills you have learned.

Write your rough copy on the paper provided by the teacher. Make corrections, and then rewrite your story in the space provided in this test booklet.

BEGIN YOUR STORY USING ONE OF THE FOLLOWING BEGINNINGS.

STORY 1:

With knapsacks on their shoulders, three excited teen-agers set out to explore a cave deep in the forest. They had trudged a mile through the forest and were in sight of the cave, when suddenly, without warning . . .

OR

STORY 2:

It was "Pet Day" at school. Our teacher had finally agreed that we could bring our pets to school for one day. Everything seemed under control in the classroom as we got ready to introduce our pets to our classmates. Just then . . .

OR

STORY 3:

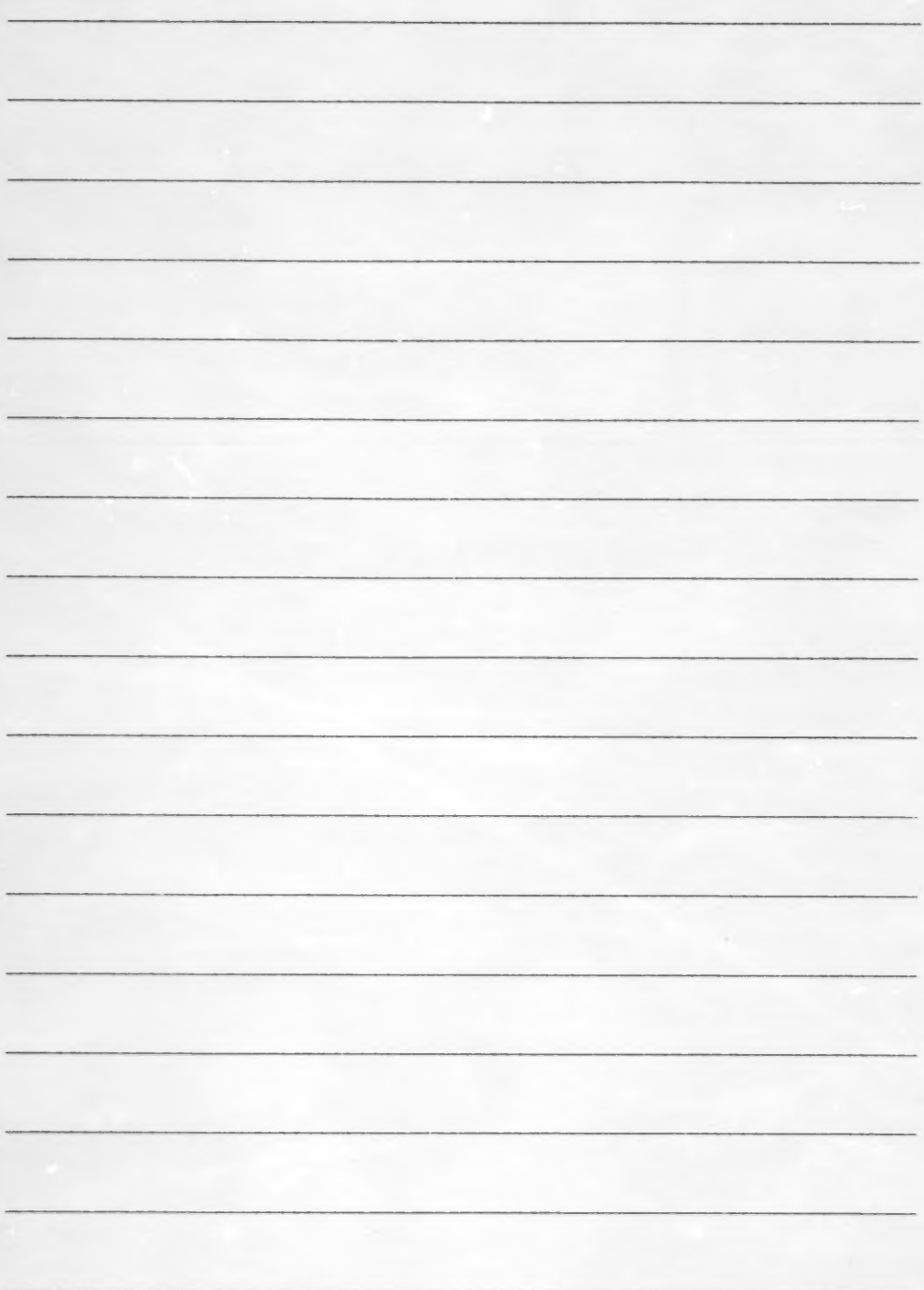
My dream had finally come true. I had been chosen to go on a space exploration trip. Our spacecraft was moving quickly through space when all of a sudden . . .

GO TO THE NEXT PAGE

WRITE YOUR FINISHED COPY BELOW:

GO TO THE NEXT PAGE

GO TO THE NEXT PAGE



WRITING ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

MEASUREMENT & EVALUATION BRANCH

GRADE 6

MANUAL

MANITOBA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

WRITING SKILLS ASSESSMENT--GRADE 6

The Measurement and Evaluation Branch of the Manitoba Department of Education is administering the Writing Skills Assessment Test in order to gather information relative to the strengths and weaknesses of student writing skills at the provincial level. The Writing Skills Assessment Test can also assist teachers in evaluating student achievement in the component writing skills of spelling, capitalization, punctuation, grammar and language usage, sentence construction and paragraph development.

Test Format

Part I - Specific Skills - Spelling, Punctuation and Capitalization, Usage, Sentence Writing

Part II - Written Product - Narrative Writing

Required Materials

1. Testing Instructions
2. Student Test Booklets
3. Pencils

TESTING INSTRUCTIONS

1. Read all instructions carefully before administering the test.

2. Instruct students not to open the test booklets until told to do so.

3. Have each student provide the information required on the cover page.

4. Instruct students to write all answers in the test booklet.

5. Grade 3 Teachers are requested to follow the instructions given below when administering the test:

   (a) Have the students write the test in ONE SITTING of approximately 80 minutes
   PART I - approximately 45 minutes
   PART II - approximately 35 minutes
   (b) Read the directions to the students for each section of the test.
   (c) Dictate the spelling words to the students. Use the sentences on the following pages.
   (d) Supply paper for the rough copy of the story.

6. When students have completed both parts of the test, check that each test has the required information on the cover, and collect the tests.

7. Return test booklets per instructions from the Measurement and Evaluation Branch.

TEST ADMINISTRATION

PART I

I. SPELLING

The teacher will say: Write the words I dictate on the line beside each number.

The teacher will: pronounce the word, use the word in the sentence, pronounce the word a second time.

ambulance	1.	The siren wailed as the ambulance sped through town.	ambulance
through	2.	The rocket hurtled through space.	through
beginning	3.	He was beginning a new job.	beginning
experience	4.	She really hasn't had any experience in riding a horse.	experience
information	5.	You can get the information if you phone the company.	information
weather	6.	The weather has been extremely stormy.	weather
business	7.	My friend's father started a new business.	business
children's	8.	The children's slide and swing were broken.	children's
their	9.	I wonder if their new dog is bigger than our St. Bernard.	their
straight	10.	I can't draw a straight line without using a ruler.	straight
chief's	11.	The chief's headdress was made of turkey feathers.	chief's
berries	12.	The berries were ripe by the beginning of August.	berries
bicycle	13.	It seems that my bicycle is always broken.	bicycle
finally	14.	The day of the contest finally arrived.	finally
island	15.	The island in the middle of the river was flooded.	island
grabbed	16.	The thief grabbed the wallet and ran.	grabbed

mysterious	17.	It was a most mysterious sound.	mysterious
questions	18.	Don't ask so many questions.	questions
kidnappers	19.	The kidnappers fled in a stolen car.	kidnappers
beautiful	20.	The autumn leaves were beautiful colors of red, yellow and orange.	beautiful
its	21.	Everything should be in its proper place.	its
accident	22.	The accident happened during the night.	accident
piece	23.	I would like to have another piece of cherry pie.	piece
churches	24.	The two churches in town are across the street from each other.	churches

AFTER THE DICTATION THE TEACHER WILL READ THE INSTRUCTIONS FOR QUESTIONS II, III, AND IV AND INSTRUCT THE STUDENTS TO WORK UNTIL THEY REACH A STOP SIGN.

II. PUNCTUATION and CAPITALIZATION

The teacher will say: Some of the Punctuation marks and Capital letters are missing in the sentences. Find the mistakes and make the corrections by marking in the necessary punctuation marks and capital letters. Do not rewrite the sentence.

III. BASIC STRUCTURE (USAGE)

The teacher will say: Underline the correct form in each of the sentences.

IV. SENTENCE WRITING

The teacher will say: Read the directions for each of the sections. Write sentences using the given directions for each section. Use correct punctuation, capitalization, and spelling when writing your sentences.

THE TEACHER WILL ALLOW APPROXIMATELY 45 MINUTES FOR THE COMPLETION OF PART I, INCLUDING THE SPELLING DICTATION. AT THE END OF THIS TIME, THE TEACHER WILL READ THE DIRECTIONS FOR PART II.

PART II

WRITTEN PRODUCT

The teacher will say: In Part II you are asked to write a story. The directions are as follows:

You have been given the beginnings for three stories. Choose ONE of them and finish the story. Make sure your story is well-organized and contains a variety of descriptive words and phrases. Pay attention to all the writing skills you have learned.

Write your rough copy on the paper provided by the teacher. Make corrections, and then rewrite your story in the space provided in this test booklet.

BEGIN YOUR STORY USING ONE OF THE FOLLOWING BEGINNINGS.

STORY 1:

With knapsacks on their shoulders, three excited teen-agers set out to explore a cave deep in the forest. They had trudged a mile through the forest and were in sight of the cave, when suddenly, without warning . . .

OR

STORY 2:

It was "Pet Day" at school. Our teacher had finally agreed that we could bring out pets to school for one day. Everything seemed under control in the classroom as we got ready to introduce our pets to our classmates. Just then . . .

OR

STORY 3:

My dream had finally come true. I had been chosen to go on a space exploration trip. Our spacecraft was moving quickly through space when all of a sudden . . .

THE TEACHER WILL ALLOW APPROXIMATELY 35 MINUTES FOR THE COMPLETION OF PART II.

KEY and MARKING SCALES[1]

GRADE 6 WRITING

PART I

I. SPELLING

MARKING SCALE
½ = Correct
0 = Incorrect

KEY

1.	ambulance	13.	bicycle
2.	through	14.	finally
3.	beginning	15.	island
4.	experience	16.	grabbed
5.	information	17.	mysterious
6.	weather	18.	questions
7.	business	19.	kidnappers
8.	children's	20.	beautiful
9.	their	21.	its
10.	straight	22.	accident
11.	chief's	23.	piece
12.	berries	24.	churches

SPELLING ITEMS KEYED TO OBJECTIVES

Item #'s	Objective
1, 4, 7, 13, 20, 22	1. Multisyllabic*
2, 10, 15	2. Silent Letters
6, 9, 23	3. Homonym
3, 16, 19	4. Ending**
12, 18, 24	5. Plural
5, 14, 17	6. Prefix-Suffix
8, 11, 21	7. Possessive

* Multi-syllabic words appropriate to the Grade 6 level as listed in current word lists.

** Double consonant and add ending.

1 Suggested marking scales are for those teachers who wish to give papers a % score. They are suggestions only, and may be modified. Provincial reports will give mean scores only (e.g. Out of 21 spelling words on the grade 3 test, the mean for the province was 18.2 correct.)

II. PUNCTUATION and CAPITALIZATION

MARKING SCALE
½ = Correct
0 = Incorrect

1. My friend remarked, "It seems to me, Pat, that you did not try very hard to see Prime Minister Collins."

2. Yes, I remember the story called "Shadows in the Forest" which was about bats, bears and baboons.

3. The cleaning woman shrieked, "Professor Black, you must remember to lock the cupboard so the snakes, bugs and spiders can't escape!"

4. My father asked, "Did you have to lay your hand on a Bible and promise loyalty to Queen Elizabeth when you became a Boy Scout?"

5. Yes, a gift of hockey sweaters, baseball bats and soccer balls was made to Bowness Elementary School by Eaton's Department Store.

6. Sandy, have you read the poem called "Miracles" and the story called "Good News" which tell about God and Jesus?

PUNCTUATION AND CAPITALIZATION KEYED TO OBJECTIVES

Item #'s	Objective
	Capitalization
2, 19	1. First word of direct quotation
9, 30, 31	2. Title of story or poem
5, 13, 21	3. Title of rank
4, 6, 14	4. Proper noun
20, 32, 33	5. Sacred name
22, 26, 27	6. Organization or Institution
	Punctuation
8, 24	1. Comma--introductory words
10, 16, 25	2. Comma--series
3, 15, 29	3. Comma--direct address
1, 12, 18	4. Quotation marks--direct quotation
7, 11, 17, 23, 28, 34	5. End punctuation--period, question mark, exclamation mark

III. BASIC STRUCTURE (USAGE)

MARKING SCALE
½ = Correct
0 = Incorrect

KEY

1. they
2. was
3. well
4. anything
5. sung
6. teach
7. too
8. bitten
9. set
10. any
11. almost
12. himself
13. between
14. were
15. fourth
16. can
17. stolen
18. into
19. flour
20. need
21. whose
22. really
23. it has
24. onto

BASIC STRUCTURE ITEMS KEYED TO OBJECTIVES

Question #'s	Objective
3, 11, 22, 21	1. Associated adverbs and adjectives
6, 9	2. Associated verbs e.g. sit, set
13, 18, 24	3. Associated prepositions e.g. of, off
2, 14, 20	4. Subject-verb agreement
5, 8, 17	5. Verb tense
1, 12, 23	6. Pronoun and antecedent
4, 10, 16	7. Negatives
7, 15, 19	8. Homonyms

IV. SENTENCE WRITING

A. Subordination

MARKING SCALE
2 = Correctly combined--used subordination
1 = Correctly combined--didn't use subordination
0 = Incorrectly combined

KEY (USING SUBORDINATION)

1. Jack went home early because he had the measles.

2. The abandoned house which was near the town was used by hitchhikers.

OR

The abandoned house which was used by hitchhikers was near the town.

B. Modifiers

MARKING SCALE

2 = Added descriptive words or phrases--3 or more high-quality modifiers
1 = Added descriptive words or phrases--2 modifiers
½ = Added descriptive words or phrases--1 modifier

KEY TO MODIFIERS

Do not count such words as the, a, etc. as high-quality modifiers.

C. Misplaced Modifiers

MARKING SCALE

1 = Correctly placed modifiers
0 = Incorrectly placed modifiers

KEY TO MISPLACED MODIFIERS

1. The lady with the long dress sat on the park bench.

2. There was a picture on the dining-room table of my brother and me paddling a canoe.

OR

On the dining-room table there was a picture of my brother and me paddling a canoe.

D. Compound Subject--to combine two similar sentences

MARKING SCALE

3 = Correctly used compound subject
1 = Incorrectly used compound subject
1 = Combined correctly without using a compound subject
0 = Incorrectly combined

KEY TO COMPOUND SUBJECT

1. The principal and the mayor will be at the meeting.

2. My friend and I like to go camping and fishing

E. Parallel Structure

MARKING SCALE
1 = Correct parallelism
0 = Incorrect parallelism

KEY TO PARALLEL STRUCTURE

1. The instructions were to take his lunch from home and to eat it at one o'clock.

2. To be fair and to not fight are rules of good sportsmanship.

OR

Being fair and not fighting are rules of good sportsmanship.

F. Sentence Pattern

MARKING SCALE
1 = Correct--directions followed
0 = Incorrect--directions not followed

KEY TO SENTENCE PATTERNS (SUGGESTED ANSWERS)

1. Did the snowmobile hit the tree?

2. The cougar did not attack the camper.

G. Inverted Order

MARKING SCALE
1 = Correct--necessary corrections made
0 = Incorrect--necessary corrections not made

KEY TO INVERTED ORDER

1. appears--change to "appear"

2. was--change to "were"

H. Complete Sentences--Correct Run-on Sentences

MARKING SCALE
2 = Correct without change in meaning
1 = Correct but meaning changed
0 = Incorrect

PART II

HOLISTIC MARKING SCALE

5 = Highly Impressive--well above average in thought, sentence structure and word choice, mostly free from error

4 = Commendable--in command of thought, sentence structure and word choice, relatively free from error

3 = Questionable--probably functional in terms of thought, sentence structure but in need of instruction

2 = Minimal--in need of remediation--frustration level

1 = Insufficient Material

Suggested mark allotment for story is 33 marks. These marks may be allotted as teacher wishes.

DESCRIPTIVE MARKING SCALES--GRADE 6

Objective	
1. Development of topic	4 = Relates details to main idea 3 = Fluctuation but focus is on the topic 2 = Deviates from topic 1 = Insufficient evidence
2. Descriptive and precise vocabulary	4 = Use of descriptive and precise vocabulary to create impact 3 = Word choice ordinary and functional 2 = Insufficient use of vocabulary indicated 1 = Insufficient evidence
3. Logical organization	4 = Ideas appropriately organized by time, place, and sequence 3 = Error in logical organization (one error) 2 = Error in logical organization (more than one error) 1 = Insufficient evidence
4. Character, setting, plot	4 = Interesting development of character, setting and plot 3 = Conventional development of character, setting and plot 2 = Weaknesses in the development of character, setting and plot 1 = Insufficient evidence
5. Variety in sentence patterns	4 = Effect created by varying sentence structures 3 = Slight effect created by varying sentence structures 2 = No effect created by varying sentence structures 1 = Insufficient evidence
6. Correct usage	4 = Uses words appropriately and correctly 3 = Error in correct usage (2 or fewer) 2 = Error in correct usage (more than 2) 1 = Insufficient evidence
7. Paragraph format	4 = Paragraph format used correctly 3 = Error in paragraph format (one error) 2 = Inadequate use of paragraphing 1 = Insufficient evidence
8. Complete Sentences	4 = Writes complete sentences (no errors) 3 = Error in writing complete sentences (one error) 2 = Errors in writing complete sentences (2 or more errors) 1 = Insufficient evidence

9. Punctuation and Capitalization	4 = Capitalizes and punctuates correctly (0-2 errors) 3 = Errors in capitalization and punctuation (3-4 errors) 2 = Errors in capitalization and punctuation (more than 4 errors) 1 = Insufficient evidence
10. Spelling	4 = Spelling attracts little or no attention 3 = Few errors which do not detract from impact 2 = Errors detract from readability and impression 1 = Insufficient evidence

WRITING ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

MEASUREMENT & EVALUATION BRANCH

GRADE 9

MANITOBA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

NAME _____ _____
(Last) (First)

DATE OF BIRTH _____ _____ _____
(Month) (Day) (Year)

SEX Male ☐ Female ☐

COURSE 300 ☐ 301 ☐ Other _____

PART I

I. DIRECTIONS: In each of the spaces provided, write the word which is dictated by the teacher.

1.	_____	16.	_____
2.	_____	17.	_____
3.	_____	18.	_____
4.	_____	19.	_____
5.	_____	20.	_____
6.	_____	21.	_____
7.	_____	22.	_____
8.	_____	23.	_____
9.	_____	24.	_____
10.	_____	25.	_____
11.	_____	26.	_____
12.	_____	27.	_____
13.	_____	28.	_____
14.	_____	29.	_____
15.	_____	30.	_____

II. DIRECTIONS: The CAPITAL LETTERS and PUNCTUATION MARKS are missing in the following paragraphs. Find each mistake and make the correction. DO NOT REWRITE.

i dont think said my father than you can have the car on friday night

why not i managed to ask

well it seems that your past record regarding such promises as having the car home on time contributing to the buying of gas and polishing the car have been neglected replied my father

but its really not my fault i blurted i cant possibly be the first to leave a party so im always late

and what are your other excuses queried my father

well i really do need a raise in my allowance so i can buy gas i answered in addition the weather has been much too cold to polish the car i would definitely get frost-bite i confidently remarked

my father pondered his reply and then said it does seem that your excuses though not brilliant do have some merit i guess its only fair that i give you another chance

III. DIRECTIONS: Read the directions for each of the following sections. Write sentences using the given directions.

A. Combine the sentences into one sentence for each group. You may change the word order and add or omit words to connect all of the given ideas.

1. The sea anemone is an unusual creature. It looks more like a plant than an animal. It has several tentacles.

_____

_____

_____

2. Many people have superstitious beliefs. One belief is that walking under a ladder causes bad luck.

_____

_____

_____

3. Gardening is an excellent hobby. It is not too expensive. Nearly everyone has the talent to grow plants.

_____

_____

_____

4. His mind is constantly filled with hair-brained schemes. The schemes are usually a waste of time. They are also a waste of energy.

_____

_____

_____

B. Write a complete sentence for each of the following by adding words to the sentence fragment. Write your sentence in the space provided but do not change the wording of the given fragment.

1. and to give you an idea of the kind of problems I have to solve

_____

_____

2. that country which had made history twenty years ago

_____

_____

3. without ever suspecting that a member of my family was guilty

_____

_____

4. eyes twinkling with laughter

_____

_____

C. Rewrite each of the following as one or more correct sentences. You may add words but do not change the original meaning.

1. The countryside provided the setting for several books two of them were award winners.

_____

_____

_____

2. He took a couple of steps, stopped, reached out, and turned the switch, as he did so, the alarm rang.

_____

_____

_____

3. The person with an education has a better chance of getting a job, therefore his chances of success are much greater.

_____

_____

_____

4. It is a personal matter, everyone has to cope with it sooner or later.

_____

_____

_____

PART II

I. DIRECTIONS: Write a business letter using the situation as given.

Ned Nelson lives at 17 Palmer Street in Brandon, Manitoba. He is ordering a silver mug (Catalogue # 2498) for his father. He wants to have the name Fred Nelson engraved on it. He is ordering the mug from:

KLIPPO COMPANY
1040 Clare Street
Montreal, Quebec
T4N 1X7

The cost of the mug is $ 9.95 plus $ 1.00 for the engraving.

The criteria in the box below will be used to evaluate your letter.

CRITERIA

1. The letter uses correct format.
2. The letter clearly outlines the request.
3. The letter uses correct spelling, punctuation and capitalization.

Write your letter in the space provided.

ROUGH DRAFT:

FINAL COPY:

II. DIRECTIONS: Choose ONE of the following topics and write ONE PARAGRAPH ONLY. Your paragraph may be written in either a comic or serious vein.

1. You have been asked to write ONE paragraph which is to be printed in a magazine which is read by parents and teachers. Discuss one of the greatest problems when growing to adulthood.

2. Your younger brother or sister has asked you about the most important skill in your favorite sport or hobby. In ONE paragraph, explain what the skill is and how it is learned.

3. You wish to give advice on buying a used car (motorcycle, bicycle, scooter, etc.). Write ONE paragraph giving this advice to "would-be" buyers.

4. You do or do not agree with one of the policies of the school administrators. In ONE paragraph outline what the policy is and explain why you do or do not agree with it. Your paragraph is to be published in the school newspaper.

The criteria in the box below will be used to evaluate your paragraph.

CRITERIA

1. Focus on topic and develop the topic.
2. Use appropriate word choice and correct usage.
3. Use correct and appropriate sentence structure and organization.
4. Use a variety of sentence patterns.
5. Use correct spelling, punctuation, and capitalization.

IF YOU WISH TO WRITE A ROUGH DRAFT YOUR TEACHER WILL PROVIDE YOU WITH PAPER. WRITE YOUR FINAL COPY IN THIS BOOKLET ON PAGE 9.

FINAL COPY:

WRITING ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

MEASUREMENT & EVALUATION BRANCH

GRADE 9

MANUAL

MANITOBA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

After dictating the spelling words,announce to your students that on page 2,

i don't think said my father than you can have the car

should read

i don't think said my father that you can have the car

WRITING SKILLS ASSESSMENT--GRADE 9

The Measurement and Evaluation Branch of the Manitoba Department of Education is administering the Writing Skills Assessment Test in order to gather information relative to the strengths and weaknesses of student writing skills at the provincial level. The Writing Skills Assessment Test can also assist teachers in evaluating student achievement in the component writing skills of spelling, capitalization, punctuation, grammar and language usage, sentence construction and paragraph development.

Test Format

Part I - Specific Skills - Spelling, Punctuation and Capitalization, Sentence Writing

Part II - Written Products - Business Letter, Paragraph

Required Materials

1. Testing Instructions
2. Student Test Booklets
3. Pencils or pens

TESTING INSTRUCTIONS

1. Read all instructions carefully before administering the test.

2. Instruct students not to open the test booklets until told to do so.

3. Have each student provide the information required on the cover page.

4. Instruct students to write all answers in the test booklet.

5. Grade 9 Teachers are requested to follow the instructions given below when administering the test:

   (a) Inform the students that they will have approximately 2 hours to write the test.

   (b) Supply paper for writing a rough copy of the paragraph.

   (c) Dictate the spelling words using the sentences on the following pages.

6. When students have completed both parts of the test, check that each test has the required information on the cover, and collect the tests.

7. Return test booklets per instructions from the Measurement and Evaluation Branch.

PART I

I. SPELLING

The teacher will say: Write the words I dictate on the line beside each number.

The teacher will: pronounce the word, use the word in a sentence, pronounce the word a second time.

parliament	1.	Many governmental bodies have a division known as parliament.	parliament
athletics	2.	More and more people are becoming interested in athletics.	athletics
environment	3.	Many agencies are promoting campaigns to help clean up our environment.	environment
government	4.	The new government has only been in power for one year.	government
instinct	5.	My basic instinct told me to run away quickly.	instinct
secretary	6.	I will have to hire a new secretary because my last one moved to another city.	secretary
tragedy	7.	It was a tragedy which could have been prevented.	tragedy
mathematics	8.	There are several courses in mathematics which I can consider taking.	mathematics
assistance	9.	Would it be possible for you to lend your assistance to the project?	assistance
adolescent	10.	The author is writing a book on adolescent behavior.	adolescent
miscellaneous	11.	There are several miscellaneous articles for sale at the department store.	miscellaneous
rhythm	12.	Some people have no sense of rhythm.	rhythm
condemned	13.	It appears as if the prisoner was condemned before he even came to trial.	condemned
conscious	14.	Because I was so upset, I really wasn't conscious of the decision.	conscious
dessert	15.	A chocolate pie with gobs of whipped cream is my favorite dessert.	dessert

humane	16.	The question was raised as to whether humane treatment was being given to the animals.	humane
pamphlet	17.	The pamphlet cover was designed by a prominent artist.	pamphlet
photograph	18.	My mother usually refuses to have her photograph taken.	photograph
provincial	19.	There's a chance that there will be a raise in provincial taxes.	provincial
knowledge	20.	Sometimes it seems that knowledge gained is soon lost.	knowledge
embarrass	21.	Some people embarrass more easily than others.	embarrass
abbreviate	22.	We were told to abbreviate wherever possible in order to conserve space.	abbreviate
physical	23.	The athletes at the competition were in top physical condition.	physical
parallel	24.	The two lines are supposed to be parallel not at right-angles to each other.	parallel
rectangle	25.	You were asked to determine the area of the rectangle.	rectangle
exaggerate	26.	I have an aunt who tends to exaggerate almost everything she says.	exaggerate
innocent	27.	The law states that a person is innocent until proven guilty.	innocent
illegal	28.	In many cities it is illegal to put campaign posters on public buildings.	illegal
quarterback	29.	The success of our football team was mainly due to our talented quarterback.	quarterback
sincerely	30.	Everyone sincerely wished that the speech would end.	sincerely

AT THE COMPLETION OF THE SPELLING DICTATION, INSTRUCT THE STUDENTS THAT THEY ARE TO READ THE DIRECTIONS FOR EACH SECTION AND COMPLETE THE TEST, WRITING ALL ANSWERS IN THE TEST BOOKLET (EXCEPT ROUGH COPY OF PARAGRAPH).

KEY and MARKING SCALES[1]

GRADE 9 WRITING

PART I

I. SPELLING

MARKING SCALE
½ = Correct
0 = Incorrect

KEY

1.	parliament	16.	humane
2.	athletics	17.	pamphlet
3.	environment	18.	photograph
4.	government	19.	provincial
5.	instinct	20.	knowledge
6.	secretary	21.	embarrass
7.	tragedy	22.	abbreviate
8.	mathematics	23.	physical
9.	assistance	24.	parallel
10.	adolescent	25.	rectangle
11.	miscellaneous	26.	exaggerate
12.	rhythm	27.	innocent
13.	condemned	28.	illegal
14.	conscious	29.	quarterback
15.	dessert	30.	sincerely

II. PUNCTUATION* and CAPITALIZATION

KEY -- ½ correct, 0 incorrect

CAPITALIZATION AND PUNCTUATION KEYED TO OBJECTIVES

Item #'s	Objectives
	Capitalization
6, 16, 27	1. First word of a direct quotation
5	2. Proper noun
12, 19, 20	3. Pronoun "I"
	Punctuation
1, 4, 22	1. Quotation marks in dialogue
2, 13, 15, 30	2. Apostrophes in contractions
14, 25, 28	3. Comma--clauses
3, 10, 21, 26	4. Comma in dialogue
8, 18, 23	5. Comma after introductory words
9	6. Comma in a series
7, 11, 17, 24, 29	7. End punctuation--period, question mark

* Quotation marks include 2 parts. Commas in a series sometimes include more than one.

[1] Marking scales are suggestions only. Note: Provincial reports will give mean scores only. (e.g. Spelling 26.2 correct out of 30.)

KEY

NOTE: MARK ONLY THE PUNCTUATION AND CAPITALIZATION WHICH IS KEYED IN THE FOLLOWING PARAGRAPHS.

"I don't think," said my father, "that you can have the car on Friday night."

"Why not?" I managed to ask.

"Well, it seems that your past record regarding such promises as having the car home on time, contributing to the buying of gas, and polishing the car, have been neglected," replied my father.

"But it's really not my fault," I blurted. I can't possibly be the first to leave a party, so I'm always late."

"And what are your other excuses?" queried my father.

"Well, I really do need a raise in my allowance so I can buy gas," I answered. "In addition, the weather has been much too cold to polish the car. I would definitely get frost-bite," I confidently remarked.

My father pondered his reply, and then said, "It does seem that your excuses, though not brilliant, do have some merit. I guess it's only fair that I give you another chance."

III. SENTENCE WRITING

A. Sentence Combining (Using Subordination)

MARKING SCALE

2 = Correctly combined - subordinating clauses or phrases, no meaning change
1 = Correctly combined - used conjunctions, awkward or meaning change
0 = Error in combining - run-on, incomplete, or two of #2

Suggested answers:

1. The sea anemone, which is an unusual creature, looks more like a plant than an animal because it has several tentacles.
   or
   Because it has several tentacles, the sea anemone . . .
2. Many people have superstitious beliefs such as walking under a ladder causes bad luck.
3. Gardening, which is not too expensive, is an excellent hobby because nearly everyone has the talent to grow plants.
4. His mind is constantly filled with hair-brained schemes which are usually a waste of time and energy.

B. Sentence Expansion (Write complete sentences using sentence fragments.)

MARKING SCALE

1 = Complete sentence
0 = Incomplete sentence

C. Sentence Revision (Run-on Sentences)

MARKING SCALE

2 = Correct without change in meaning (punctuation and capitalization correct)
1 = Correct but punctuation and/or capitalization incorrect
0 = Incorrect

Suggested answers:

1. period or semi-colon after "books"
2. period or semi-colon after "switch"
3. period or semi-colon after "job"
4. . . . matter that (which) everyone has to cope with sooner or later

PART II

I. BUSINESS LETTER

MARKING SCALE--FORMAT

5 = Correct format
4 = Incorrect format (one or 2 errors)
3 = Incorrect format (3 or 4 errors)
2 = Incorrect format (more than 4 errors)
1 = Insufficient evidence

FORMAT KEY

- centred on page
- margins
- form - inside address
  - return address
  - salutation
  - body
  - complimentary closing

* * *

MARKING SCALE--CONTENT

5 = Purpose achieved - clearly outlines the request--includes all information
4 = Purpose achieved - reader must infer some information or organization confusing
3 = Purpose achieved - questionable--essential information omitted or incorrect--misleading because of poor organization
2 = Purpose not achieved
1 = Insufficient evidence

* * *

MARKING SCALE--MECHANICS*

4 = Mechanics attract little or no attention
3 = Few errors which do not detract from correctness
2 = Errors detract from correctness and impression
1 = Insufficient evidence (parts missing)

* Mechanics includes Spelling, Punctuation and Capitalization.

Suggested mark allotment for letter is 25 marks. These marks may be allotted as teacher wishes.

II. PARAGRAPH

HOLISTIC MARKING SCALE

5 = Highly Impressive - well above average in thought, sentence structure and word choice, mostly free from error

4 = Commendable - in command of thought, sentence structure and word choice, relatively free from error

3 = Questionable - probably functional in terms of thought, sentence structure and word choice but in need of instruction

2 = Minimal - in need of remediation--frustration level

1 = Insufficient Material

Suggested mark allotment for paragraph is 25 marks. These marks may be allotted as teacher wishes.

DESCRIPTIVE MARKING SCALES

Objective	Scale
1. Focus on topic	4 = Ideas relate to assigned topic 3 = Fluctuation but focus is on assigned topic 2 = Deviates from topic or doesn't write on assigned topic 1 = Insufficient evidence
2. Topic development	4 = Originality of ideas creates impact 3 = Ideas ordinary and functional 2 = Insufficient number of ideas 1 = Insufficient evidence
3. Organization	4 = Well-organized, coherent, unified paragraphs 3 = Conveys idea but coherence and unity weak 2 = Lacks coherence and unity 1 = Insufficient evidence
4. Word choice	4 = Word choice correct and appropriate 3 = Word choice ordinary but functional 2 = Word choice restricted 1 = Insufficient evidence
5. Usage	4 = Usage attracts little or no attention 3 = Few errors which do not detract from impact 2 = Errors detract from readability and impression 1 = Insufficient evidence
6. Sentence structure	4 = Sentences are complete and well-constructed 3 = Sentences are complete but awkward (2 or more) 2 = Sentences are incomplete or run-on (2 or more) 1 = Insufficient evidence
7. Variety in sentence patterns	4 = Good variety in sentence structure 3 = Some variety in sentence structure 2 = No variety in sentence structure 1 = Insufficient evidence
8. Punctuation and capitalization	4 = Punctuation and capitalization attracts little or no attention 3 = Few errors which do not detract from impact 2 = Errors detract from readability and impression 1 = Insufficient evidence
9. Spelling	4 = Spelling attracts little or no attention 3 = Few errors which do not detract from impact 2 = Errors detract from readability and impression 1 = Insufficient evidence

WRITING ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

MEASUREMENT & EVALUATION BRANCH

GRADE 12

MANITOBA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

NAME _____ _____
(Last) (First)

DATE OF BIRTH _____ _____ _____
(Month) (Day) (Year)

SEX Male ☐ Female ☐

COURSE 300 ☐ 301 ☐ Other _____

PART I 1.

I. DIRECTIONS: One word in each group of words is misspelled. Find the misspelled word, underline the word, and spell it correctly in the blank following the group of words.

1. surprise despise supervise sympathise _____
2. serviceable imagineable valuable manageable _____
3. courageous grieveous adventurous nervous _____
4. environment mischievous perscribe despise _____
5. disgust privlege temperature laboratory _____
6. sovereign fierce neice sleigh _____
7. seperate accidentally necessary repetition _____
8. sincerely amazement truely ninety _____
9. reccommend misstate occurrence overrate _____
10. permissible visible admissable laughable _____
11. tradgedy pronunciation scheaule secretary _____
12. precede exceed procede succeed _____
13. particular parliment restaurant government _____
14. forgetting preferred admitted openning _____
15. chimney hinderance drowned disastrous _____
16. controlled unusual grammar dissappear _____
17. definite expence condemn candidate _____
18. fascinate confidence attendence intelligent _____
19. studious counterfeit committed requirment _____
20. predjudice replied nephew certain _____
21. undoubtedly temperment sympathize tendency _____
22. across equipment maintanence forty _____
23. parallel article believe ocassion _____
24. familiar immediately extremely imaginery _____

II. DIRECTIONS: The following paragraphs have been written without CAPITAL LETTERS, PUNCTUATION and INDENTATION. Correct the passage by marking in the Capital Letters and Punctuation. Place an X to indicate Indentation of a paragraph.

on tuesday night the audience which contained a large number of high school students applauded the author enthusiastically the author included several items on his program poetry excerpts from his novels anecdotes from his personal life and opportunities for questions he also emphasized during the evening that a complete reading program should include four types of reading one good book each week a newspaper or news magazine magazines of comment and book reviews the newspaper on wednesday commented that from the point of view of the editor the evening was a great success moreover that success was due to the dynamic personality and delivery of the author later on in the day when i ran into one of my bookworm friends i asked was the authors appearance really that great even better than the newspaper stated answered my friend i even had him autograph my book the great decision didnt you also have him autograph away and gone his book about outer space i queried no i felt he was too busy on the other hand some people had him sign five or six books so i guess i could have had him autograph two responded my friend

III. DIRECTIONS: In each group, one sentence is preferable to each of the others. Choose the best sentence in each group and circle the letter at the beginning of the sentence.

1. A. Having been delayed by a train accident, the leading role was played by a local girl who had been studying the part for only two weeks.
   B. Because the leading lady was delayed by a train accident, a local girl played her role who had been studying the part for only two weeks.
   C. Because the leading lady was delayed by a train accident, her role was played by a local girl who had been studying the part for only two weeks.
   D. Having been delayed by a train accident, a local girl who had been studying the part for only two weeks played the role of the leading lady.

2. A. Hunt met Montgomery when he was fifty-nine and had just been accused of being involved in the biggest scandal in town.
   B. When he was fifty-nine, Hunt met Montgomery who had just been accused of being involved in the biggest scandal in town.
   C. He had just been accused of being involved in the biggest scandal in town, when Hunt first met Montgomery who was fifty-nine.
   D. Hunt was fifty-nine when he first met Montgomery who had just been accused of being involved in the biggest scandal in town.

3. A. The original draft of the novel and the version finally published differ in several ways which are apparent to anyone who has read both versions.
   B. The original draft of the novel and the version finally published differs in several ways which are apparent to anyone who has read both versions.
   C. The original draft of the novel and the version finally published differ in several ways which are apparent to anyone who have read both versions.
   D. The original draft of the novel and the version finally published differ in several ways which is apparent to anyone who has read both versions.

4. A. She couldn't finish filling out the form because she didn't know her father's business address, what her mother's maiden name was, and her social insurance number.
   B. She couldn't finish filling out the form because she didn't know her father's business address, her mother's maiden name, and her social insurance number.
   C. She couldn't finish filling out the form because she didn't know her father's business address, her mother's maiden name and what her social insurance number was.
   D. She couldn't finish filling out the form because she didn't know what her father's business address was, her mother's maiden name and her social insurance number.

5. A. It is essential that the articles state its purpose and give the names of those students who have allowed their comments to be printed.
   B. It is essential that each article state its purpose and give the names of those students who has allowed his comments to be printed.
   C. It is essential that each article state its purpose and give the names of those students who have allowed their comments to be printed.
   D. It is essential that each article state their purpose and give the names of those students who have allowed their comments to be printed.

6. A. It seemed that I was just arriving when someone indicated that it was time to leave.
   B. It seems that I was just arriving when someone indicated that it was time to leave.
   C. It seemed that I had just arrived when someone was indicating that it was time to leave.
   D. It seemed that I had just arrived when someone indicated that it was time to leave.

7. A. The small child is insisting that she would go to bed peacefully if her mother would first give her a cookie and read her two stories.
   B. The small child insisted that she would go to bed peacefully if her mother would first give her a cookie and read her two stories.
   C. The small child insisted that she will go to bed peacefully if her mother will first give her a cookie and read her two stories.
   D. The small child is insisting that she will go to bed peacefully if her mother would first give her a cookie and read her two stories.

8. A. We were told that we should write in ink, print our name, give our I.D. number, and to write on one side of the paper.
   B. We were told to write in ink, to print our name, to give our I.D. number, and that we should write on one side of the paper.
   C. We were told to write in ink, to print our name, to give our I.D. number, and to write on one side of the paper.
   D. We were told to write in ink, that we should print our name and give our I.D. number and to write on one side of the paper.

9. A. The modern city of today has a great tall skyscraper which are larger than any buildings previously built.
   B. The modern city has many skyscrapers which are larger in size than any buildings previously built before.
   C. The modern city has many skyscrapers which are larger than any buildings previously built.
   D. The modern city of today has a great many skyscrapers which are larger than any buildings previously built.

10. A. Blood, vengeance and silence are the ancient law of the lawless gangs who live in large cities.
    B. Blood, vengeance and silence is the ancient law of the lawless gangs who live in large cities.
    C. Blood, vengeance and silence is the ancient law of the lawless gangs who lives in large cities.
    D. Blood, vengeance and silence are the ancient law of the lawless gangs who lives in large cities.

11. A. Two hours after the lightening storm he was finally able to breathe normally.
    B. Two hours after the lightning storm he was finely able to breathe normally.
    C. Two hours after the lightning storm he was finally able to breath normally.
    D. Two hours after the lightning storm he was finally able to breathe normally.

12. A. As the hot boiling water descended down into the tube, the square crystals slowly dissolved.
    B. As the boiling water descended into the tube, the square crystals slowly dissolved.
    C. As the boiling water descended into the tube, the crystals which were square in shape slowly dissolved.
    D. As the hot boiling water descended into the tube, the crystals which were square in shape slowly dissolved away.

13. A. He tried to loose weight by not eating desserts and dairy products.
    B. He tired to lose weight by not eating deserts and dairy products.
    C. He tried to loose weight by not eating desserts and diary products.
    D. He tried to lose weight by not eating desserts and dairy products.

14. A. The dog with scruffy matted fur sat gazing longingly into the distance where he had seen his master disappear.
    B. The dog with scruffy matted fur longingly sat gazing into the distance where he had seen his master disappear.
    C. The dog sat gazing longingly with scruffy matted fur into the distance where he had seen his master disappear.
    D. The dog sat gazing longingly into the distance where he had seen his master disappear with scruffy matted fur.

PART II--ESSAY

DIRECTIONS: Choose ONE topic from EITHER List A or List B. In List A you are given only the title for an essay. In List B you are given the title plus a thesis statement which gives the main idea you are trying to present to the reader.

WRITE AN ESSAY ON THE TOPIC YOU HAVE CHOSEN. THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA WILL BE USED TO EVALUATE YOUR WRITING.

CRITERIA

1. Interest of content
2. Style
3. Purpose
4. Organization of ideas
5. Variety of sentence structure
6. Word choice and usage
7. Spelling, Punctuation, Capitalization

LIST A

1. High School Fashion
2. The Right to Be Happy
3. The Need for Restriction
4. An Issue of Great Concern to Society
5. Sports

LIST B

1. The Profession (Career) I Have Chosen

   I have chosen _____ as a profession (career) because of the many opportunities it offers, and because it is a worth-while profession (career).

2. The Older Generation

   There are several reasons why the older generation does not understand the younger generation, but something can be done about it.

3. Regulating Children's TV Habits

   Although some TV programs are undesirable, parents should not regulate what children watch.

   OR

   Because some TV programs are undesirable, parents should regulate what children watch.

GO TO THE NEXT PAGE

WRITE YOUR ROUGH COPY ON THE PAPER PROVIDED BY THE TEACHER. MAKE CORRECTIONS AND THEN REWRITE YOUR ESSAY IN THE SPACE PROVIDED.

WRITING ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

MEASUREMENT & EVALUATION BRANCH

GRADE 12

MANUAL

MANITOBA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

WRITING SKILLS ASSESSMENT--GRADE 12

The Measurement and Evaluation Branch of the Manitoba Department of Education is administering the Writing Skills Assessment Test in order to gather information relative to the strengths and weaknesses of student writing skills at the provincial level. The Writing Skills Assessment Test can also assist teachers in evaluating student achievement in the component writing skills of spelling, capitalization, punctuation, grammar and language usage, sentence construction and paragraph development.

Test Format

Part I - Specific Skills - Spelling, Capitalization, Punctuation, Grammar and Usage

Part II - Written Product - Essay

Required Materials

1. Testing Instructions
2. Student Test Booklets
3. Pencils or Pens

TESTING INSTRUCTIONS

1. Read all instructions carefully before administering the test.

2. Instruct students not to open the test booklets until told to do so.

3. Have each student provide the information required on the cover page.

4. Instruct students to write all answers in the test booklet except their rough copy for the essay. (Teachers are to provide paper for the rough draft.)

5. Grade 12 Teachers are requested to tell the students that they have approximately 2 hours to write the test.

6. When students have completed both parts of the test, check that each test has the required information on the cover, and collect the tests.

7. Return all test booklets per instructions from the Measurement and Evaluation Branch.

KEY and MARKING SCALES

GRADE 12 WRITING

PART I

I. SPELLING

MARKING SCALE

½ = Correct in identification and spelling
¼ = Correct in identification but incorrect in spelling
0 = Incorrect in identification

KEY

1. sympathize
2. imaginable
3. grievous
4. prescribe
5. privilege
6. niece
7. separate
8. truly
9. recommend
10. admissible
11. tragedy
12. proceed
13. parliament
14. opening
15. hindrance
16. disappear
17. expense
18. attendance
19. requirement
20. prejudice
21. temperament
22. maintenance
23. occasion
24. imaginary

II. CAPITALIZATION and PUNCTUATION*

MARKING SCALE
1/3 = Correct
0 = Incorrect

KEY (See Page 3)

CAPITALIZATION AND PUNCTUATION KEYED TO OBJECTIVES

Item #'s	Objectives
	Capitalization
28, 33, 44, 54	1. First word in a quotation
2, 6, 10, 16, 23, 58	2. First word in a sentence
3, 17	3. Proper nouns
40, 47	4. Titles
24, 25, 37, 50, 56, 60, 61	5. Pronoun "I"
	Punctuation
8, 13	1. Comma--series
26, 34, 62	2. Comma--in dialogue
11, 18, 20, 38, 48	3. Comma--parenthetical phrases
4	4. Comma--non-restrictive clauses
55, 59	5. Comma--after introductory words
27, 32, 36, 43, 53	6. Quotation marks--direct quotation
7, 12	7. Colon--beginning of a list
19	8. Semicolon--between coordinate clauses
45	9. Apostrophe--contractions
29	10. Apostrophe--possessive noun
5, 9, 14, 21, 30, 35, 41, 49, 51, 57, 63	11. End punctuation
39, 46	12. Underlining book titles
1, 15, 22	13. Paragraphing--indentation
31, 42, 52	14. Paragraphing--indentation for change of speaker

KEY FOR CAPITALIZATION AND PUNCTUATION

On Tuesday night, the audience, which contained a large number of high school students, applauded the author enthusiastically. The author included several items on his program: poetry, excerpts from his novels, anecdotes from his personal life, and opportunities for questions. He also emphasized, during the evening, that a complete reading program should include four types of reading: one good book each week, a newspaper or news magazine, magazines of comment, and book reviews. The newspaper on Wednesday commented, that from the point of view of the editor, the evening was a great success; moreover, that success was due to the dynamic personality and delivery of the author. Later on in the day when I ran into one of my bookworm friends, I asked, "Was the author's appearance really that great?" "Even better than the newspaper stated," answered my friend. "I even had him autograph my book, The Great Decision." "Didn't you also have him autograph Away and Gone, his book about outer space?" I queried. "No, I felt he was too busy. On the other hand, some people had him sign five or six books, so I guess I could have had him autograph two," responded my friend.

III. BASIC STRUCTURES: GRAMMAR, USAGE AND SYNTAX

MARKING SCALE
½ = Correct
0 = Incorrect

1. C
2. B
3. A
4. B
5. C
6. D
7. B
8. C
9. C
10. B
11. A
12. B
13. D
14. A

BASIC STRUCTURES KEYED TO OBJECTIVES

Item #'s	Objectives
3, 10	1. Number agreement
6, 7	2. Verb tense--tense change
1, 14	3. Placement of modifiers and participles
4, 8	4. Parallel structure
11, 13	5. Confusibles e.g. affect, effect
2, 5	6. Pronoun reference
9, 12	7. Redundant expressions

PART II--ESSAY

HOLISTIC MARKING SCALE

5 = Highly Impressive - well above average in thought, sentence structure and word choice, mostly free from error

4 = Commendable - in command of thought, sentence structure and word choice, relatively free from error

3 = Questionable - probably functional in terms of thought, sentence structure but in need of instruction

2 = Minimal - in need of remediation--frustration level

1 = Insufficient Material

Suggested mark allottment for essay is 60 marks. These marks may be allotted as teacher wishes.

DESCRIPTIVE MARKING SCALES--GRADE 12

Objective	Scale
1. Interest of content	4 = Originality and interest of ideas creates impact 3 = Ideas ordinary and functional 2 = Little or no evidence of interesting content 1 = Insufficient evidence
2. Style	4 = Develops effective style 3 = Ordinary and functional style 2 = Does not develop a style 1 = Insufficient evidence
3. Purpose	4 = Writes with a purpose 3 = Usually writes with a purpose 2 = Does not write with a purpose 1 = Insufficient evidence
4. Organization of ideas	4 = Ideas appropriately organized by time, place and sequence 3 = Error in logical organization (one error) 2 = Error in logical organization (more than one error) 1 = Insufficient evidence
5. Variety of sentence structure	4 = Positive effect created by varying sentence structures 3 = Slight positive effect created by varying sentence structures 2 = No effect created by varying sentence structures 1 = Insufficient evidence
6. Word choice and usage	4 = Word choice appropriate and correct 3 = Few errors which do not detract from impact 2 = Errors detract from readability and impression 1 = Insufficient evidence
7. Punctuation and capitalization	4 = Capitalizes and punctuates correctly (0-2 errors) 3 = Errors in capitalization and punctuation (3-4 errors) 2 = Errors in capitalization and punctuation (more than 4 errors) 1 = Insufficient evidence
8. Spelling	4 = Spelling attracts little or no attention 3 = Few errors which do not detract from impact 2 = Errors detract from readability and impression 1 = Insufficient evidence